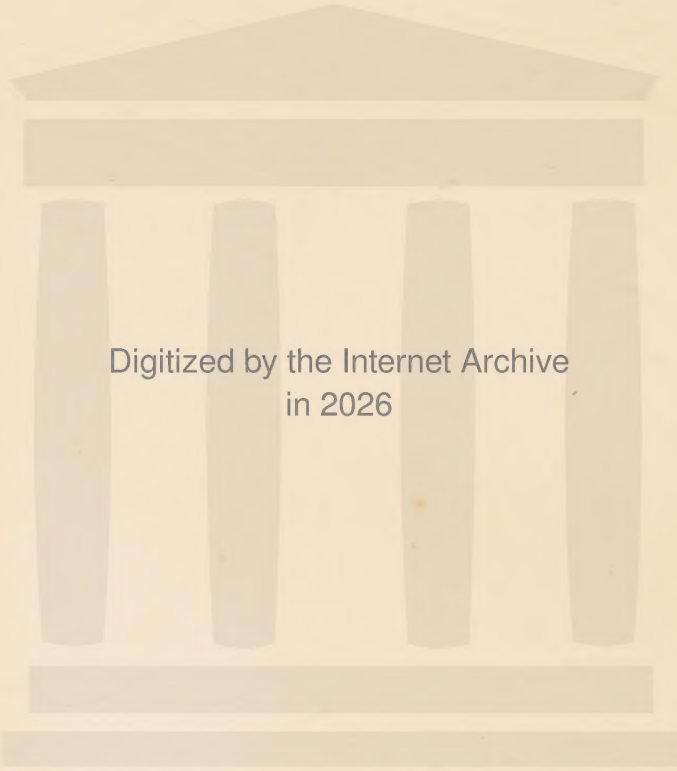




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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE

VOL. CC.

JULY—DECEMBER 1916.



WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, EDINBURGH;
AND
37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

1916.

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No. MCCIX.

JULY 1916.

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"FALLEN ANGELS."

SCATTERED up and down the United Kingdom there have grown up like mushrooms in the past few months several miniature Sandhursts. In these, various officers and N.C.O.'s, shattered débris of Expeditionary Forces all over the world, are busy night and day turning out officers to fill the gaps in the cadres of the wonderful K. armies — gaps whose presence may be realised from the daily "Roll of Honour," which shows us by the large number of "they who fall by the wayside" what the daily wear and tear of this war of attrition really means.

Most of these Officer Cadet Battalions, as they are officially described, are independent units, but one or two are offshoots of famous Officer Training Corps, and wear the badges of their parent units, thereby being invested from their very birth with a state and rank and tradition to bid them "play

the man," even as their forebears. The one I am endeavouring to describe forms part of an O.T.C., known to the world at large as "The Fallen Angels."

It is quartered in a quiet little town in Loamshire, which before the war attracted public notice only by the presence of its school, almost we might say its *raison d'être*. Early in the war there descended upon the town hordes of armed or semi-armed men, and the sleepy streets in the smiling valley re-echoed to the clash of rifle-butts, the tramp of soldiery, and the occasional jingle of spurs (for some of us are mounted). The scared householders woke to find their houses and their precious carpets delivered over to the hobnailed boots, or should we say the cloven hoofs, of myriads of fallen angels disguised as "billets."

For many long months the fallen angels plied and learnt

their trade, and month after month some, or others, of them discarded pack and rifle and shapeless Government clothing to don for a brief space beautiful new-cut, well-fitting raiment, adorned with bright winking stars, replacing their sombre badges and buttons by others bearing crests of many a famous regiment. For a short while they would bask in the sunshine of feminine smiles of sisters and (more important) other people's sisters, and suffer proud parental introductions: "My boy—just got his commission in the 307th King's Own Fine Fellows."

Smiles and proud words, that more often than not hide aching hearts that dread the morrow's dawn, which sees the laden troop-trains under way.

And then to war—to don once more the pack and straps—gone the bright stars and badges. But this time the harness buckles on to leaders and teachers of men—the boy's estate is far behind—the cheery careless comradeship of the O.T.C. ranks sloughed for the responsibilities of those in whose sole charge are the lives and wellbeing of many men.

Again a little space, and perhaps they are known no more. All that remains is the orderly-sergeant's voice reading orders to the new blood in the quiet summer evening in sleepy Loamshire, with its laughing English fields and gay hedgerows spread about the lazy canal—

"The O.C. regrets to an-

nounce the following casualty in the Expeditionary Force:—

Killed in Action.

2nd Lieut. G. O. FORWARD
(formerly Pte. No. 9991, X Coy.
Fallen Angels)."

That and a cross of biscuit-box among the pollarded willows of Flanders, or perhaps a tiny heap of stones in the sandy waste which is all that is left to mortals of the Garden of Eden.

Stay,—somewhere, for certain, in a locked drawer among a tumble of dainty feminine treasures—bits of faded ribbon, gloves, dance programmes, and what not—a black button, bearing the image of the Prince of Darkness—and, somewhere, surely a woman's broken heart—*débris* of war.

But all the "Fallen Angels" leave not for the war. The officers, whom we might call the Seraphim, remain—unwilling—held back by their very rank and knowledge to thankless, arduous duties as trainers of still more angels. Month after month they watch with longing eyes the ceaseless outward flow of full-fledged subalterns departing to that far-off Promised Land—"the Front"—which they themselves, like Moses, will never reach, but spend their weary days in guiding others to its portals.

Good work—valuable work—greater work than holding trenches, but thankless work—void of that great incentive to human endeavour—"kudos."

Worse still, to the minds of certain churlish people, work void of distinction and honour. But the Seraphim take it all uncomplainingly, doing the work for the work's sake—plodding along in the desert, pointing out to their eager followers the swift way to the Promised Land, their only reward the knowledge of duty—thankless duty—done to the uttermost inch.

"Wherefore praise we famous men
From whose bays we borrow.
They that put aside to-day,
All the joys of their to-day,
And with toil of their to-day
Bought for us to-morrow."

I wonder if Kipling had met the Seraphim before he penned the above lines; one could hardly think of words more apt if one wanted to describe them.

After many months had elapsed the War Office realised that there were other Angels abroad in the land in the shape of certain officers and N.C.O.'s hobbling about on sticks in health resorts, or busy in arm-chairs, each suffering the attentions of at least seven women handing tea, toast, cakes, and cigarettes, and generally with the best of intents making life boresome to the muffler-clad, sister-susy-shirted "wounded 'eroes." These angels we may describe as the Cherubim, not from their high rank or virtues, but by reason of the fact that, like the conventional cherubim in medieval art, they mostly lack a good deal of their bodies. It is not their fault, because

they started their career complete; but owing to untimely contact with Hun shells, bayonets, bullets, and other lethal weapons, or still worse the ravages of sickness, almost as great a factor in war as "villainous saltpetre," they have mislaid part or parts of their anatomy.

The War Office considered that they might be usefully employed in training embryo officers, more especially since, like the drunkard at the temperance meeting, they would furnish "awful examples" of how *not* to take cover, and consequently any teachings they might expound to the cadets would carry greater weight than those of the seraphim.

So the inner circles of the S.D. department at the War Office devised them a wonderful net, with meshes of trebly woven silk bearing on every strand the mystic signs, "Fit for general service at home," and cast it abroad over the cherubim. Then drawing in their net they sorted the catch and set most of it to work in cadet battalions. But some of it they sent to the chief of the Fallen Angels, with orders to him to raise four cadet companies and place them in charge of the cherubim (as per delivery voucher). So he assembled his company and squadron commanders in the early spring, and told them to draft as many of their men as they thought fit to hold commissions into cadet companies. Further, to aid the cherubim in their knowledge of fallen angels'

ways and customs, he attached some of the seraphim to each company of cadets.

The cherubim are of various ages and ranks and degrees of bodily completeness. For instance, the commander of No. 1 Company is a senior major of the British Army, whereas the leader of No. 2 is a mere captain of Indian Infantry. The latter's company sergeant-major is a sprightly cherubim, minus one knee-joint mislaid in the Ypres salient (the present one of silver being of home manufacture) — its absence compensated for by a "*médaille militaire*." The presence of the sergeant-instructor of musketry, who in times of peace is partner in a well-known firm of military tailors, lends an air of solidarity to the ranks of No. 2.

On the other hand, they cannot quite live up to the

quartermaster-sergeant of No. 1, whose normal occupation is to manage an hotel. When Brer Hun is finally penned up in the ancestral pig-sty, the bullet-scarred countenance of the quartermaster-sergeant will doubtless draw many visitors to hear "mine host" fight his battles over again.

The cadets are of all ages and descriptions. They flash like meteors across the gaze of the cherubim, and we know them but for a short space, so the reader must not complain if he gets but a passing glimpse of a few of our brightest stars. One salient point, however, is noticeable about them all — namely, their exceeding keenness and thirst for knowledge, and any one with the slightest experience in teaching will realise what a difference that makes to their instructors.

I. TRENCH WARFARE.

"Seems to me," said the skipper of No. 2 Cadet Company to his satellites, as he pointed distastefully to the schedule of work for the following week, "that some people can't see the wood for the trees or the art of war for the trenches. Judging by the cove who made out this programme, 'war' should be spelt T · R · E · N · C · H."

To tell the truth, the programme appeared to have been devised by some one who considered trench-grubbing as the be-all and end-all of a soldier's career. The speaker was busy with a coloured pencil reducing

the schedule to a smudgy mass of red chalk, from which peeped forth here and there, like stars on a cloudy night, occasional references to paragraphs of the official training manuals.

"I suppose it's the creation of one of those babes who, on the strength of ten days at Havre, inform you that it is quite unnecessary to train men in field warfare, since all future wars, and especially the present one, will be decided in the trenches. What's the section in the Army Act, Gamaliel, concerning the fate of them as spread rumours 'calculated

to create alarm and despondency'?"

"Gamaliel" was a subaltern who in pre-war times wasted his substance eating many dinners in the Temple, and hence had been appointed Instructor in Military Law to the company by its commander, whose chief business in life was to conceal his ignorance on law and kindred matter. Consequently, he had hailed the advent of "Gamaliel" with tears of joy, stolen a copy of the Manual of Military Law and a tattered volume of King's Regulations from the Orderly Room, and presented them to Gamaliel with directions to lecture at all hours of the day on the differences between "using" and "offering" violence, "breaking out of barracks" and "absence without leave," how many minutes form one day's absence, and all other such legislation for the better governance of the land forces of the Crown as might help towards the downfall of the "Willies."

Gamaliel having no one junior to whom he might pass the greatness thrust upon him, was perforce compelled to spend the small wee hours in mastering the tautology of the above volumes, which he stigmatised as "worse than any bally Bradshaw," in order to expound them next day with an air of knowledge to a crowd of cadets, worse hecklers during lecture hour than any political audience at a luckless candidate's election speech.

"Should think probably section 5, but it might be 6 (2)

(a); only the question comes in there as to whether they were on the line of march or otherwise, and did they or did they not draw swords, beat drums, or discharge firearms when making the remark?"

"Don't know about drums," said the skipper, "but as a class that type of child goes in for a lot of trumpet-blowing. However . . . to come back to our muttuns, we'd better have a trench show of sorts just to let the children see what trench warfare is really like. Now then, Phayle, what price a trench assault under your ægis—intense bombardment—wire cutting—bombs—blocks—bayonet men—stinks—and all the usual stage effects which accompany what the papers describe as 'Great attack on the Menin Road. Trenches captured.' In fact, a 'push' by one who's been pushed. No. 4 Cadet Company will collaborate, co-operate, and generally spectate. You can get out orders and a map of sorts just to add to the make-belief of the whole picnic."

"Right-oh! I'll put up a stunt of sorts in that lot of trenches on the edge of the common. I'll go out and make a sketch to-day which we can reproduce as an aircraft map, and we'll buy fireworks and steal bombs from the anarchists. How about a machine-gun or two to help things along?"

"Good," said the skipper. "I'll get friend Balancer to come out with us and bring his crank-handle experts and feed-block jammers with blank *ad lib.*"

Thereupon the conclave broke up; Gamaliel to expound once more on the difference in degree of crime between a cadet telling a sergeant, on receipt of an order, that he didn't like his face, and the same remark made casually to the same individual if met in a back street; Phayle, armed with much squared paper and portfolios of orders saved from "pushes" in France, to produce a really theatrical setting for the assault; and the Captain to seek out the feed-block jammers in their lair in the purlieus of the Machine-Gun School.

On opening the plank door of their hut and peeping in, he saw Balancer poised gracefully on a shelf at the side of the room swinging his legs, his hands deep in the pockets of a most unmilitary mechanic's overall, from one pocket of which protruded the business end of a spanner; while ranged in front of him were rows of earnest students intent on taking down the words that fell from his lips, as though they were pearls indeed. Around the room were various large-scale drawings, in pinks and blues, of the interiors of all types of machine-guns, looking like anatomical charts, while in a small room at the far end an overall-clad sergeant was cleaning up a stumpy machine-gun with as much care as a mother scrubbing a child's face for a prize distribution. The general atmosphere was of the "Do it *now*" order.

"Little (c) in brackets; two

d—turn the crank-handle on to—— Good afternoon, sir!" This to the Captain, whom Balancer had just perceived; and he jumped down from his perch. "Carry on, please," said the Captain, seating himself on a stool. "I'll wait till you've done. It's nothing frantically important."

The lecture went on, and the assiduous scribes resumed their noting down of every minute detail of the "sequence" which the instructor gave forth out of his head as lucidly as if from a book.

When it was finished the class filed out for five minutes to put ice on their heads, and the Captain got to business.

"Look here, oh! feed-block expert—my company's goin' to do a trench assault beano next Wednesday. We want as many stage effects as possible, so what about you and your class bringin' out some guns and much blank and joining in? You could hold a communication trench while they try and bomb you out. It's practice for you in dodging bombs."

"*Rather!* Only, for the Lord's sake, don't drop a dummy Mills on my precious tangent sights. You can drop 'em on our heads and we won't grouse, but if you bust our sights we won't play in *your* yard any more."

"Done! I'll bomb you with Chinese crackers and Paine's thunder-bangs instead. The intense bombardment will cease at 10.30 A.M., and the company will rush the first line Hun trenches held by the 4th Bavarians, in other words, No. 4

Platoon, and the S.M. can do Rupy of Bavaria for the nonce—I'm sure he'll dress the part. Send you the scheme later—so long!"

It is Wednesday morning, a beautiful bright morning in April, and for once real early summer weather, not a cloud in the sky. All the trees are just breaking into leaf, and the yellow gorse flowers on the common make the countryside look in the sunshine as if some one had scattered it broadcast with gold dust.

On the side of the common nearest to the town are a collection of nice, deep, muddy trenches, constructed by various "instruction," or "destruction," classes, and in the middle a machine-gun emplacement in which Balancer and his following are busy installing a machine-gun. In order to assimilate themselves more closely to the surrounding earth, still wet from the night's rain, they have discarded their caps and swathed their heads in khaki handkerchiefs. With the addition of a pair of earrings apiece they would make passable buccaneers on a provincial stage for "The Pirate's Peril, or the Bloodstained Pocket-Knife."

In another set of trenches, seventy yards or so away, is assembled No. 4 Company, who have come out to see the "picnic," and pick up useful (?) tips from the antics presently to be performed by No. 2.

Their commander is talking to the captain of No. 2, and in the middle distance are various

lesser lights, subalterns, instructors of the permanent staff, &c., while coming up the road from the valley is to be seen a small column of pack-carrying infantry, whose advent is heralded by the strains of a popular ditty which informs you that—

"We're a d——d sight smarter than the Coldstream Guards.

Now then, *all* together! We're," &c.

They are No. 2 Company coming up to the assembly trenches, which unfortunately exist only in the shape of hastily scratched shallow holes, but for the purposes of the scheme are assumed to be "trenches—complete—revetted—boarded—infantry—for use of," to borrow the phraseology beloved by the denizens of that home of mystery—the Q.M. Office.

In the support trenches of the position are to be seen groups of "Hun" infantry with packets of Crystal Palace fireworks, which later in the day will do duty as bombs; while on a mound in the centre of the position stands "Rupy, Prince of Bavaria," exhorting his legions to wipe out their contemptible foe. A few words drift down to us: "And when I gives you the signal to charge, every man o' you goes in, and them as ain't got bombs, heave chunks of mud."

Which informs us that "Rupy," anticipating trouble after the present intense bombardment (imaginary), is preparing some dire scheme of counter-attack on the first-

line trenches, which are bound to be rushed in a little while. In front of these Phayle and two or three of his myrmidons are busy putting up what they are pleased to term the "residue of the enemy entanglement."

"Funny to see people busy in trenches in this way, and no attentive gentlemen sniping," remarks O.C. No. 4. "Pity we can't do it this way in France. Save a lot of nervous strain!" The speaker is one of the cherubim, and it is the first time for many a long day that he has seen troops at work without the monotonous accompaniment of whistling bullets or droning shells.

"Almost induce one to join the Army, wouldn't it?" replies the skipper of No. 2. "Well, it's close on to 10.30, and the assaulting troops appear to be ready. Also, I see Phayle dishing out crackers to his anarchists. What's the matter with going over there to see them start? Judging by the amount of work Phayle's put into it, it should be 'some' show."

They stroll over to the assembly trenches, where three platoons of No. 2 are waiting to assault. These are supposed to be the right company of an attacking brigade. Amongst them are three grenade parties, whose job is to bomb outwards along the trenches, and down any communication trenches they may come across; while the rest of their company hastily "reverses" the trench. This means

hauling down the parapet on the front side and converting the parados (or rear wall, built to prevent fragments of bursting shells coming in from behind) into a parapet, giving protection from fire from the Hun trenches behind and from the counter-attack, which is as certain as tinned salmon and asparagus at an Indian guest-night dinner. The enemy's first-line trench can be had by either side practically for the asking; the trouble is to get the trenches behind, of which both sides dig line after line, so that each army is protected by as many lines of trenches as a Dutch girl has petticoats.

The usual procedure in trench warfare is to capture the second or third line of the enemy's trenches. The first, as I have said, is yours for the asking. All that is required is to subject it to an intense artillery bombardment, after which your infantry walk over and occupy it. But no sooner have they done so than the enemy repeats the manœuvre and chucks you out again, for his guns have the range of his own front-line trenches to an inch. There is also the further disadvantage that a line of trenches, after being subjected to a really heavy bombardment, ceases to be trenches, and becomes merely a tumbled heap of earth. So it is better to take the enemy's second, or, better still, his third line trench, which will be much less battered and distinctly safer from his guns. Having got into

them, you endeavour to suppress any attempts of the enemy to come up the communication trenches by bombing down them, and also to extend your gain laterally by bombing out sideways along the main trench you have occupied. For this purpose you select expert murderers, handy with bomb and bayonet, and form them into grenade parties, as they are officially termed—or "anarchists" or "suicide clubs," as the army prefers to call them.

Observe, then, on the right flank of the company various stalwarts under the leadership of Cadet Gabbler, an erstwhile sailorman, stuffing their haversacks, of which each anarchist carries two, with bombs (from which, needless to say, the explosive has been removed) and with high art fireworks to replace the missing explosives and add to the reality of the show.

Gabbler is distinctly a feature of the company. He is a small wizened man of uncertain age, with a great thirst for knowledge and, as his name would lead you to imagine, a fine natural gift for argument. One of these days, when he becomes an officer, he will hang up some show at the front in order to argue with the corps commander as to whether the Hun likes sauerkraut or merely eats it because he can't get Quaker Oats, after which he will be hanged or shot, and the army lose a distinctly interesting character and a very energetic and painstaking officer. But if he avoids that fate and

eventually returns to his natural profession, the sea, he will develop into a sea lawyer of the finest type. He has been selected to take charge of the anarchists to-day, in order to see whether he can get down twenty yards of communicating trench without stopping more than twice to argue as to whether it is better to light a fuse with a match or a cigarette.

The leading line is in charge of another noteworthy character in the company, namely, Cadet Grafstein. Naturally, he is of German origin, his father having been thrown out of Saxony for disagreeing with the Prussians in '66. His two brothers are already officers at the Front, and No. 3 appears to be as keen as his elders to square accounts with the Kingdom of Prussia. He looks a German, and his manner of dealing with the cadets temporarily in his charge is also distinctly War Lordish. For all that his ancestors were Saxons, there is a lot of the Prussian Officer caste about Grafstein. Phayle describes him as a "forceful" character, which about hits the mark. But he should make a most excellent officer, provided his company commander has strong nerves. Otherwise, he will probably go mad and shoot Grafstein one morning after his 131st question that day. He has all the German characteristics of method and persistence, and reduces his instructors to the state of the average small boy's father taking young hopeful in a

train—"Eat your damn bun and stop asking questions!"

The fateful moment arrives, and the company crawls out through the entanglement in front of our first-line trench. Tucked into each man's belt are a couple of sandbags, and slung on his back a pick or shovel. On the stroke of the half-hour they leap to their feet and race for the opposite trenches, now presumably void of any living enemy. But the tornado of (imaginary) shells has spared the energetic Balancer and his gun, and before the first line gets to the trenches a nasty rattle on their right apprises them of the presence of that much-dreaded foe, an overlooked enemy machine-gun. They fling themselves into the trenches, and Gabbler and his anarchists push their way through the close-packed men to try and bomb the gun emplacement, while the leading bomber, amid the jeers of the onlookers, succeeds in exploding one of his crackers prematurely in his hand. The next one, however, is better managed, and as it dropped into the emplacement and burst with a welcome "whoof!" the bayonet-men nip round the traverse to "do in" friend Balancer and his infernal gun. But the wily gun's crew didn't wait for the second bomb. When it went off they and their gun were some way down a communication trench, where they settled down at a turn (communication trenches are dug in zigzags) and waited. The

anarchists following run into it at about twenty yards, and hastily give way. Then ensues a battle royal. The only sign of the foe is the ugly muzzle of the maxim and the tip of Balancer's nose round a corner. Gabbler having finished an argument as to whether the leading bayonet-man was or was not a casualty, proceeds to incite his anarchists to deal destruction with bombs to the daring few in front, while his sandbag men erect a "block." But the trench is zigzag and the throwing poor, also the cracker-fuses are overlong for the distance, and consequently the one or two that do fall into the trench are hurled back. Most of them, however, fall among the men of No. 4, who are whooping on Gabbler and his merry hooligans.

The resourceful Grafstein, however, proceeds on his own initiative to send forth certain braves by devious routes to take the gun in flank. The plan is well conceived, but they reckon without Rupy of Bavaria, who at the critical moment falls upon *their* flank and smites them hip and thigh with "thunder-bangs," and, worse still, clods of earth large and solid.

Then, following up the success, he counter-attacks with great violence on the captured front-line trench, which the rest of the company are busy trying to get into a state of defence. "Down tools!!"—"Huns!!!" shrieks Grafstein, and every one hurls down their tools to loose off blank at point-

blank range into Rupy's legions coming up at the double, while the "anarchists" hurl bombs at friends and foes alike with noble impartiality. The issue of the battle is decided by the opportune arrival of another machine-gun sent over hastily from the "British" line, and Rupy's Brave Bavarians are ordered to retire.

"Time to stop it now, I think," shouts Phayle to the skipper. The latter, busy with a camera, blows his whistle and signals the close. The company assembles, and Phayle proceeds to point out errors, and explain how things would have gone had the show been in Flanders instead of in peaceful Loamshire. The company listen attentively, for Phayle has spent many months in Flanders, and further, his tunic is decorated with the purple and white ribbon of the Military Cross. Both facts carry considerable weight with the Cadets.

"Of course, to have done it with real bombs and a real enemy would have taken far longer, but it gives you an idea

as to the vast amount of preparation and method required for a trench assault," concludes Phayle. "Any one got any questions to ask?"

Gabbler springs to attention. "Sir! You said that my bayonet-men were too slow getting round the traverses. How quick should they be?"

"Why, as quick as they can, of course, Gabbler."

"Yes, sir, but that is just my point. They *were* as quick as they could be, so how could they have been too slow?"

"Oh, go and think it out, Gabbler," replies Phayle. "Any one else want to ask questions?"

"Please, sir," says Grafstein, "is the number of grains of explosive in a Mills bomb directly proportional to the number of segments in the case? The book says on page 327——"

"Fall in the company, please, Sergeant - Major," says the skipper. "Stick out an advanced guard, Verger, and we'll start home."

"GANPAT."

AN ADVENTURE.

AT the beginning of last November the Hospital staff of which I was a member found themselves, with those of several other British medical units, at Vrnjatohka Banja, a health resort situated on a range of low hills at the foot of the mountains which border the wide Morava valley on the west. Having once definitely rejected the idea of fleeing over these mountains and making our way through the Montenegrin passes to the sea coast, we had nothing to do but wait for the arrival of the enemy who was advancing from the north, and the sound of whose guns we could hear growing nearer day by day. The place was full of hospitals, but all of the wounded who could be moved had already been sent away, and there was comparatively little to do. For me, a lay member of the staff, whose business dealt with administration, there was really nothing to do, and when an opportunity presented itself of setting out to look for some truck-loads of stores which had been left behind on the main railway line on our retreat from the north, I welcomed it joyfully, glad of an excuse for changing the tedium of waiting for an enterprise which might be exceedingly useful and which promised at least the possibility of some adventure. The trucks, we had been informed, lay at Krushevats, about

fifteen miles south-east of us, in territory which might or might not be already in the hands of the enemy; but as we had then no stores and practically no personal belongings, the attempt to recover something, be it only a pot or two of marmalade, seemed worth the risk.

On the evening of November 8 the chief of one of the other British units came to tell me that he was sending his car to Krushevats on the following day to take his Commissariat Officer on business, and that if I cared to avail myself of the opportunity the car was at my disposal. On Tuesday, November 9, therefore, at eleven o'clock of a beautiful morning, I started with Dr M., a highly educated and accomplished Serbian gentleman, Doctor of Mathematics and Professor in the Belgrade University, who had been attached to that particular Mission in the capacity of Commissariat Officer. We were driven by one Milan, who, I was told, was not the regular chauffeur, and who was certainly the most eccentric driver of the many with whom I have driven. He occupied the entire road, and at times part of the ditch on either side as well. A tree anywhere on the road appeared to have an irresistible attraction for him; he charged it full tilt, swerving as he reached it and missing by a hair's-breadth, then

careering triumphantly to the other side of the road. I am not usually nervous in motor-cars, but before we had travelled a mile from Vrnyatchka Banja I had quite resigned myself to an inevitable smash, and when I offered to take his place Milan appeared unable to stop, and it seemed on the whole safer to let him have his way. I was not surprised to hear that he was not the usual driver, but during the following few days I looked back longingly to that drive, and wished that the inevitable smash had accomplished itself.

We knew that by this time the Austrians were very near us. Some days previously they had attempted to cross the Morava not far from Vrnyatchka Banja; but we did not know if this had yet been done, and we saw no signs of them till we were close to Trstenik—a small town ten miles or so from our station. Then, looking across the river, we saw a long train of horse- and ox-waggons winding along the mountain road from the north, and we knew that we were in touch with the enemy. On the outskirts of Trstenik Milan was prevailed upon to stop, and we held a council of war. We questioned some peasants who were on the road, and they informed us that the Austrians were already in possession of Trstenik, but that they were quiet and behaving themselves very well. M. proposed that we should go to the military headquarters of the town and ask for a “permit” to go to Krushevats

for our stores. At the worst, he argued, they could only refuse to give it, and we would then return to Vrnyatchka Banja. I confess I had qualms. I had been especially exhorted not to get taken prisoner, nor had I any desire to anticipate fate in that direction, but I lacked the courage to refuse. Also, in order to go back, it would be necessary for Milan to turn the car, and this in itself was a terrifying prospect, and one to be postponed as long as possible. After all we were Red Cross servants, we wore Red Cross brassards, and our car was marked large with that symbol. So we drove on into Trstenik, passing a number of soldiers clothed in blue, who paused in their occupation of shifting sacks of flour from a mill warehouse into carts to look at us with mild curiosity, and drew up at the house where we were informed the Seventh Regiment had its headquarters. Here M. descended to interview the commandant. I, alas! spoke then very little German, so I remained in the car looking about me.

Presently I saw coming down the street a lady, evidently an Englishwoman, accompanied by two Austrian officers. Seeing me, she came up to the car and wished me good morning, introducing herself as Madame C., and giving a name which I immediately recognised as that of an English, or rather Irish, woman who had married into a well-known Serbian family.

"I suppose you are an American?" Madame C. inquired.

"No," I replied, "I am an Englishman."

"An Englishman!" she exclaimed, apparently surprised. "And going about openly like this? How perfectly splendid! I did not know it could be done."

"Nor did I," I said. "In fact I have really come to find out whether it can be done. I have come to ask for a pass to go to Krushevats to get some stores."

At this point the Austrian officers, who had evidently understood the gist of our conversation, intervened to say that I must go with them, and I descended from the car, and accompanied them to Madame C.'s hospital, which stood a street or two away, and where I was introduced to Miss C., Madame C.'s daughter, and to a senior officer, who told me in French that I must now consider myself a prisoner of war. I protested, Madame C. protested, Miss C. protested. We all protested. I said that I could not become a prisoner of war in this casual manner, that I had no clothes but what I stood in, that my friends would be anxious, that Red Cross servants were immune. In fact I adduced all the arguments I could think of, but it was of no use. The senior Captain was inexorable. He said I must accept war conditions, and that these laid down that all Englishmen should be made prisoners wherever they were found.

He added that he himself had not had his clothes off for seven months—a statement which I found it difficult to believe. I asked to be allowed to go back to Vrnjatchka Banja to say what had happened and relieve my friends' anxiety, promising to return and deliver myself up that evening. He seemed to regard this as some sort of joke, and to consider that I had not realised the gravity of the situation. It was not safe for me to go about, he said. I might be shot by one of the patrols, and that would be an "incident." Then M. arrived with the car, and he and Milan were also made prisoners, while the car was confiscated. Again we protested, and this time our protests were supported by the junior officer who had first taken me in charge, and who seemed inclined to be friendly. However, it was all of no avail, and we were told we should be sent across the river as soon as possible to Battalion Headquarters at Grabovats.

So we were handed over to an armed escort, who conducted us to the river bank, where we sat for an hour or more waiting for some means of transport, and feeling slightly foolish. I, however, derived some satisfaction from the thought that, so far as I knew, I was the first Englishman to be made prisoner of war by the Austrians since the time of Richard Cœur de Lion. I tried to point this out to our escort, who did not appear much impressed by the historical claim, but evinced more

interest when I offered him a cigarette.

Presently we were joined by Madame C. and Miss C., who had put up for me a small sack containing some necessary garments, a tooth-brush and—happiest thought of all—a piece of soap, together with some biscuits from their store. The kindness of these two ladies, which I shall never forget, certainly went far to brighten an incident which had its sombre and unpleasant side. They waited until a raft, employed in the construction of a temporary bridge to take the place of the big bridge blown up by the Serbians a few days previously, had arrived; and on this we were placed and conveyed across the Morava. The dignity of our embarkation was marred by the fact that the raft stuck in the mud a few yards from the bank, and nearly everybody had to get out and shove; but eventually we floated off and waved our farewells to the last friendly faces we expected to see for some time.

Arrived at the other side of the river we followed our escort to Grabovats, where were the Battalion Headquarters, and where we waited for some minutes while our guide presented his paper of instructions. Thence we were marched to Brigade Headquarters, and there learned that the Brigade authorities had no power to deal with our case, and that we must go to Lubostenya, where the Divisional Headquarters Staff had its office, and where we should learn

our fate. All this time we had not been subjected to any formal examination, nor had our passports or other papers been inspected, though a note had been made of our names. We all three wore Red Cross brassards on our arms, and I imagine that it was due to this fact that the glances of the soldiers among whom we threaded our way were more curious than unfriendly.

Lubostenya is one of the beauty spots of Serbia. It lies in a secluded valley among the hills, some five miles from the river, and is surrounded by high and beautifully wooded mountains. This particular Division of the Austrian army was encamped round a monastery which the General had appropriated for his quarters, and as night fell and the stars came out in a cloudless sky, and the camp fires twinkled in the valleys and on the mountains behind which the young moon was setting, even prisoners in our unhappy plight could not fail to be impressed with the picturesqueness of the scene. But here we were in the heart of the Austrian army, and any lingering hope of immediate liberty vanished. They would never have taken the trouble to send us all this way in order to let us go again at once; and so it turned out, for after waiting for some time seated on a bench among a group of non-commissioned officers while our escort went to make his report, we were visited by an officer who informed us that we should be detained for the

night. They were prepared to treat us as officers, he said, and we should be given a room to ourselves and supplied with rations from the officers' mess, but accommodation was very limited, and we were living in war conditions, which always implied some hardship. Then a sergeant took us in tow and led us past the monastery to a small courtyard around which some outhouses stood. He opened the door of one of these, ushering us in, and we found ourselves in a room about ten feet square and resembling a cellar. The whitewashed walls were bare, and so was the broken-brick floor, and it contained no furniture of any sort or description.

The sergeant, however, produced two empty kerosene tins and a board, which formed a rough bench against the wall, and on this we seated ourselves, while our jailer went out, and we heard him fasten the door behind him. And as I heard this sound a quite indescribable passion of fury possessed me. I have often read of prisoners who screamed and dashed their heads against their prison walls, and now I knew exactly how they felt, and the sensations which prompted them to carry on in a manner so ridiculous in the eyes of free men. It seemed to me that I could stand anything but the locking of that door, and I realised then, as forcibly as I ever realised anything, that imprisonment in any shape or form is a sheer abomination. It was now getting on for five o'clock, and our cell was nearly

dark, the only light which found its way in coming through a small grated window on the outside of a wall two feet thick. M. had by this time given way to despondency. I did my best to cheer him, having conquered my momentary feeling of horror; but the only one of the party who was really cheerful was Milan, the eccentric chauffeur, and he was evidently an optimist by nature. I never knew him depressed, or at least I never knew him show any signs of depression. I trust his good spirits are still unimpaired.

We sat almost in silence for an hour, and were then visited by the officer who had met us on our arrival. He apologised for the absence of furniture in our apartment, but said he would send in some straw and some candles. He was sorry that no other comforts could be provided, but war was war, and every one in the circumstances had to do and suffer unpleasant things. Dinner would be sent to us from the officers' kitchen. He asked if we had any objection to Milan sharing our room, and we assured him we had none. I asked if the door could be left unlocked, and he said that that could certainly be arranged, but reminded us that there was a sentry at the entrance to the courtyard, who would make things unpleasant if we attempted to go beyond that limit. That was a trifle. It seemed to me to make all the difference in the world to know that we could go even into the

courtyard. Later we received a call from Ober-Lieutenant K., the young officer who had shown himself friendly at Trstenik. He was most kind, offering to provide me with cigarettes, and telling me that if I required anything I was to send for him. I am inclined to think that Ober-Lieutenant K. came up to Lubostenya expressly to see how we were getting on, and I tender him here my heartiest thanks. He promised to carry messages to Madame C., and to say that we were being well treated and had no cause for complaint.

After his departure the cook from the officers' kitchen next door came to see us. His name was Joseph B., he informed us, and he talked English with an American accent and American turns of speech. He had lived in America for several years, and had come over to Europe for the war, leaving his wife and three children behind him. His immediate desire was to get back to America as soon as possible. No more European wars for him, said Joseph. He hated the whole thing—I never met an Austrian officer or man who did not hate it,—but Joseph was especially emphatic in his disapproval. "It is a God-damned business," he said, and when this did not seem sufficiently forcible he added another and quite unprintable adjective. The circles of American society which Joseph adorned must have been accustomed to language that was frequent and painful and free, for he seldom spoke without making use of an expres-

sion calculated to bring a blush to the cheek of the young person. He went out shortly, and returned bringing us three cups of wine, which he insisted on our drinking, though M. protested that he was a teetotaler. Joseph had evidently had some wine himself, and perhaps this loosened his tongue. He was very pleasant, but I think that next morning's reflection must have given rise to the fear that he had been too loquacious overnight, for I was pained to find that he greeted me with a cold and unrecognising stare, and replied surlily to my friendly salutation. For some time I was doubtful whether Joseph was his normal self on that evening or on the following morning, but as he maintained his reserve until our departure, I was reluctantly obliged to come to the conclusion that Joseph was really under the influence of liquor on the night of our arrival. It seemed sad, and slightly immoral, that Joseph drunk should be such a much more amiable person than Joseph sober.

We waited until nearly nine o'clock for our promised dinner, and then came to the conclusion that we had been forgotten, so dined frugally off some of Madame C.'s biscuits and some cocoa which M. still had in his Thermos flask; and then, two bundles of fresh straw having been brought in, we spread it over the floor, put out our candle, and were soon asleep. It seemed to me that we had slept for hours when

we were awakened by Joseph, who entered once more with three plates of rice and very savoury meat, our rations from the officers' kitchen. We ate, and then slept again, or at least my companions slept and I tried to do so, but without any immediate success, for these two men snored as, I believe, never men snored. The late dinner seemed to have been too much for Milan, who was probably accustomed, like most Serbians of his class, to a meat repast at midday and little thereafter, and he was now the noisiest sleeper that could be imagined. He slept as he drove the car, in fits and starts, with violent alarms and excursions, while M. played his part steadily and rhythmically. I have been told that I snore occasionally—though I do not believe it—and I can only say that if my efforts that night were in any degree comparable with those of my fellow-prisoners, we must have struck terror into the breasts of such of the Austrian army as were within hearing. Milan flung himself from side to side—I think he must have been driving in his sleep—and at one point I found a heavy boot on my head, though we had started fairly in parallel lines. But the straw made a very comfortable bed, and by retiring into a corner and allowing Milan three-quarters of the cell for his evolutions, I contrived at last to sleep very well.

Early in the morning I went out to inspect the situation, of which I had only gathered a

vague idea on the previous evening. Our prison was an outhouse belonging to the monastery, and lay on one side of a courtyard about eighteen feet square. There were three other rooms looking on to the yard, and in these were housed thirty-six other prisoners, the expropriated inhabitants of the rich and comfortable monastery. They consisted of three priests, two patriarchical in appearance and one a young man, their wives, families, and retainers. These rooms formed two sides of the yard; at the back was a blank wall, and in front, at the entrance, stood a small Hungarian gypsy, very black and looking more like a monkey in uniform than I should have considered possible in a man. He carried a rifle and bayonet, of which he seemed immensely proud, and he gave me to understand very clearly that I must not attempt to get out of the courtyard on pain of death. In ordinary circumstances his antics would have been amusing, but as matters stood they were slightly annoying. Still, it was a great thing to be able to stand in the yard where one could see the sun and the sky and the trees, and presently Milan was allowed to fetch some water in my water-bottle, and we washed our hands and faces and picked the straw from our clothes and made ourselves generally tidy. I was momentarily expecting a summons for examination, but none arrived, and throughout the day no officer came near us. In the distance I saw Ober-

Lieutenant K. standing among a group of officers outside the entrance to the monastery. When he saw me he drew himself up, clicked his heels and saluted, as did all his companions; but this, though it impressed the small sentry—which was perhaps the idea—afforded me little comfort. At eight o'clock cocoa was brought to us, with a small piece of black bread for each, evidently an officer's breakfast ration, and then we fasted until the evening, as our own biscuits and cocoa were now finished. As the day wore on M. grew more and more despondent, and by nightfall he was in the depths of despair. He had described himself to me as being by choice a philosophical pessimist—not indeed at any time the most exhilarating kind of companion—but his pessimism rapidly got the better of his philosophy, and he soon declined even to discuss the situation. "They don't care," he said. "They are busy with other matters and we are of no consequence. We are as good as dead." So by degrees a silence fell between us. It was really too depressing to be told continually that one was as good as dead. Milan was my only joy, and our communications had to be brief and commonplace, for he spoke no language but his own and I had little Serbian. Early in the afternoon, however, there was a stir and bustle among the occupants of the courtyard, and looking out we saw approaching a long line of Serbian prisoners. "They have

captured the whole Serbian army," said M., and at first it did look as though an enormous number of prisoners had been taken; but we found subsequently that they had only numbered seven hundred, half of them being soldiers taken in battle and destined for internment in Hungary, and the rest peasants rounded up and impressed for public works. Among these latter were many old men and boys.

As night approached it really did seem as though we had been forgotten, and it was quite evident that the idea of treating us as officers had been allowed to lapse. Officers certainly eat once a day; we had eaten nothing except the small pieces of bread. Even Joseph had failed us, and this added to our gloom. It is not a pleasant sensation to feel that for all practical purposes one has ceased to exist; that one has been blotted out of the book of life and forfeited all rights and privileges pertaining to living men, and I sympathised with M.'s despair. Still I clung to the hope that there was some mistake, and that all would come right in the end. After dark the cooks from the soldiers' kitchen brought meat and black bread to the people next door to us, and this they offered to us also. It was very greasy, and we ate with our fingers, dipping in turn into the common dish—altogether a messy performance. But Milan at least behaved himself better that night, perhaps on account of the threat I held out of throwing him to

the sentry if he misbehaved himself again.

At six next morning we were given some dark liquid which passed as coffee. Milan and I drank it, but M. refused to touch it. He said he never had liked coffee. At eight the officer who had received us came with news. M. and I were to go to Chukoivats with the column of prisoners who had marched in on the previous afternoon. At Chukoivats, a town about thirty kilometres from Lubostenya in a northerly direction, lay the Headquarters of the Division in which Vrnjatchka Banja was situated, and there at length we should learn what was to become of us. I asked if he could give me any idea of my probable fate, but he assured me he could say nothing definite. He held out little hope that we should be allowed to return to Vrnjatchka Banja. It was most probable that I should be sent to some town in Austria where prisoners were already concentrated. "Would there be any English there?" I asked. No English, he replied, but many of other nationalities. Milan was to remain behind to drive the car. There was a grain of comfort in that. Retribution would certainly overtake somebody, and that right soon.

So we bade farewell to Milan and to our fellow-prisoners with whom we had made acquaintance—the young priest was to go with us—and marched down to the column of Serbian soldiers and peasants who had

camped out in the valley below. We were placed at the head of the column with some Austrian orderlies who had recently been prisoners and employed as orderlies in a Serbian hospital. These men were now returning to Austria, and I was sorry to notice that they had no intention of letting the Serbians forget that their positions had been reversed. My bag was given to a soldier to carry for me, and after some delay we started and marched to Grabovats, at the entrance to the valley, and here we were halted and kept waiting for three hours in pouring rain. It was very unpleasant, but the halt had its advantages, as it provided an opportunity for the Serbian women from the neighbouring farm-houses to bring such provisions as they had to sell to our starving crowd. I learned now that it was two days since these unfortunate men had eaten, and the rush and scramble for the maize bread, beans, and maize cobs brought by the women was a painful sight. It was now three o'clock, and neither M. nor I had eaten anything that day, so we were able to sympathise to some extent with the men who had been so much longer without food. The young priest, who marched with us, gave me, at M.'s suggestion, a piece of maize bread from the loaf he had bought, and it seemed to me now to taste excellent, though on other occasions I had been quite unable to eat it. M. refused to touch it. In-

deed for at least thirty-six hours he ate nothing at all, and as he was a man of poor physique, nervous, and highly strung, I was at times anxious about him. He was now more despondent than ever, and assured me that they intended to kill us all by exposure and exhaustion, and that however far our company might be called upon to go we should be given nothing to eat whatever. Indeed at one point, while we were drawn up by the side of a ditch, and saw advancing on us a company of soldiers with rifles, he remarked that we were to be shot down there and then. "It is to be a massacre," he said; and though I laughed then, I have often wondered since, hearing with complete incredulity how the Austrians have shot prisoners who were unable to keep the line of march, to what extent such reports owe their origin to brains slightly disordered by exhaustion and anxiety.

At about four o'clock we started again and marched rapidly along the road, which here follows the contour of the hills. This road was badly cut up by the transport of guns and ammunition-waggons, and the mud in places was a foot deep. The column had faced right-about now, and instead of being at its head we were at its tail. Perhaps this had its advantages, as I think our presence may have exercised a restraining influence on the guards who brought up the rear. These men were by

no means vicious, but they had their orders. They must get the column to its destination at all costs, and if necessary the stragglers, even if these might be old men or boys, must be driven along with blows of rifle-butts or sticks. It was a sad sight, and reminded one of pictures of marches of exiles to Siberia. At times I had to make an effort to collect myself, in order to realise that I was not dreaming, that I was really a prisoner, with all these others, being driven along to an unknown fate. Where a maize-cob with a few grains remaining on it lay by the side of the road, it was eagerly seized upon by the man who first spied it, and a rush was made for every wild-rose bush by the wayside on which any red berries remained. I tasted some of these, but, hungry as I was, found it impossible to eat them.

Soon it began to grow dark, and it was quite evident that we should not reach Chukoivats that night. At about half-past five we turned into a large field bordering the Morava river, where the column was halted and addressed by the non-commissioned officer in charge. "You can collect wood and make fires," he said; "but any one who attempts to escape will immediately be shot." We were ordered to remain with the Austrian orderlies, the aristocracy of the party. The stout wooden fence round the field was soon demolished and fires were

kindled. My linen bag was brought to me by the soldier who had carried it, and I set to work to dry its sodden contents. When this had been accomplished it rained again, so I gave up the struggle, packed up the clothes and sat on them. It rained most of that night, and the conditions were generally disgusting, but at least we had an excellent fire—the patrol took care of that—so it was possible to keep one corner of one's body warm at a time. But the general opinion was well expressed by one of the non-commissioned officers as he added fuel to the dying fire at midnight. "I wish," he said, "that all the diplomatists in London and Paris and Berlin and Vienna and Buda-Pesth and Nish and Constantinople and Sofia—yes, and in Rome—could have to pass the night like this till the war is over." And everybody without exception applauded the sentiment. Before settling down for the night our companions, the Austrian orderlies, brewed cocoa, which they informed us was English cocoa and very good. They supplied it to their friends the non-commissioned officers and to the patrol, but they offered none to us, which, I confess, surprised me.

It was an uncomfortable and a very long night, and I tried various positions for sleep before accepting the inevitable and lying down resolutely in the mud. Having once made up my mind to this I slept

fairly well, except when, at times, one of the patrol, returning from his rounds, accidentally sat down on my head. Fortunately I was wearing a heavy overcoat, with a thick leather lining, and this kept out most of the wet. But the conduct of M. disturbed me. He spent all the latter part of the night standing motionless by the camp fire, like another philosopher on a celebrated occasion many years ago. He was pleased when I told him in the morning that he had reminded me of Socrates, but said it was impossible for him to sleep, and he had been listening all night to the conversation of his fellow-countrymen who were lamenting the sacrifice of Serbia.

Towards daybreak the sky grew clear, and the Great Bear, which I had seen at intervals throughout that interminable night, was sinking below the hills when the order to march was given. At half-past five on a perfect winter's morning we started. The sky was now cloudless, but we saw that snow had fallen during the night and the summits of the higher mountains were white. The Austrian orderlies again brewed cocoa, but this time they offered some to us and we drank it gratefully. I only learned the reason for this improvement in their manners later. It seems that a commissioned officer had appeared from somewhere and joined our party for a short time. Seeing the cocoa brewed and drank he remarked, "I cannot under-

stand how you can do that without offering these gentlemen any." "They are our enemies," the orderlies expostulated; "why should we share with them?" "As you like," replied the officer, "but for my part I can only feel sorry for any one in that position." So we got our cocoa.

We had made friends with many of our fellow-prisoners by this time, and with them we discussed their probable destination. The general impression was that they were on the way to Kraguivats, there to be employed on road and railway mending, but M. was convinced that he and I were destined for Austria. We should march to Belgrade, he said, if we could, and go thence by train. When I asked why we should have been told that we were to go to Chukoiavats, he replied that that had been intended to cheer us up. The journey now was very painful, several of our companions staggering along under the weight of copper utensils which had been collected from farm-houses and were to be used for making shells. Many of the old men and boys were exhausted with fatigue and starvation, and could hardly keep up with the column. There was one boy with a crooked back who looked as though he might fall at any moment. "Ne mogu," he said in reply to some banal expression of sympathy on my part, "I simply can't do it." And indeed it was quite evi-

dent that he was utterly worn out. But M. informed me that these boys were probably being sent back to their villages and would be all right when they reached their homes.

Our way now was frequently obstructed by the movement of troops from the Chukoiavats Division. Train after train of guns, ammunition-carts, and army service waggons passed us, and I was very much impressed by the apparent excellence of all the equipment. Accustomed as I had become to the sight of Serbian soldiers—and in these latter days that sight had not been impressive, for they had been usually bootless and in tatters—it was disheartening to note the extreme efficiency of the Bohemian, Czech, and Hungarian regiments we met. The horses struck me more forcibly than anything else. Among the thousands I saw there was not one which gave any sign of being other than in the pink of condition. Many of these transport waggons were driven by Russian prisoners.

M. and I merely aroused curiosity among the soldiers we met. They pointed to our brassards and remarked, "Doktor," and conveyed the idea that they were chiefly impressed by the size of the net which brought in fish of all sorts. With our friend the young priest, however, it was different. Him they hated. He was a "popa," a priest of the Greek Orthodox Church, and they were Roman Catholics, therefore they hated him. That

was their religion. Many of them hurled insults at him as they passed, and when I asked M. what they were saying he would not translate. "I don't think the English language has the words," he said. The priest's dignity was admirable. He drew himself up, saluted, and smiled as these insults were flung at him. In Serbia, as elsewhere, many of the priests live on the people and on the fat of the land, and the monastery of Lubostenya had been for many years a rich source of income to the Church and a drain on the poor; but this priest at least knew how to carry himself in adversity, and I admired him then.

It was ten o'clock by the time we reached a small town which, by the encampments lying round about it, I guessed to be the Headquarters of a Division, and therefore Chukoiavats. All this time I had been handicapped by my inability to speak to anybody, while M. was apparently too depressed to use his knowledge of tongues to make the inquiries I wanted him to make, but now I was determined to seize my opportunity. In the street the column was halted, and I found myself detached for a moment from the rest. An elderly officer was standing near, and him I approached with the inquiry if he spoke French.

"I do not," he replied, "but I will send some one who does," and in a few moments a young staff officer appeared, who spoke French fluently, and

to whom I explained the situation. "Is it not possible," I ended, "to arrange for us to return to Vrnatchka Banja where our Missions are?" "Certainly," he replied, "for it seems to me ridiculous for you to be here when your Missions are at Vrnatchka Banja. I will have an authority prepared at once for you to return there." It seemed almost too good to be true, but subsequent events were even more surprising. "Can you tell me if it is possible to get anything to eat here?" I inquired. "We have eaten nothing to-day, and are hungry." "Of course," our new acquaintance returned eagerly, "come with me, and you shall have breakfast."

So our troubles were at an end. We followed him into the officers' mess, where we were given the best they had—the Colonel, the officer to whom I had first spoken, even producing his favourite liqueur in which we might drink his health. Everything was done for our comfort that could be done, and if we had been old and valued friends of the mess we could not possibly have been more hospitably entertained. Each officer who entered the room was formally presented, and each shook hands and spoke a few words before taking leave. The change was so sudden and so wonderful that the sense of unreality increased every moment. Finally, cigars and cigarettes were set before us, and we were told that lunch

would be served at midday, and we would be very welcome if we cared to attend that meal.

We discussed the war with several of the officers. One, who spoke English well, expressed surprise when I told him that we had been at Belgrade during the bombardment. "Why did you leave?" he asked. "You would have been better off if you had remained." I said I thought this quite likely, but that we had acted under orders, and that in any case the number of shells falling made the city an uncomfortable spot—especially for non-combatants. He told me he had been one of the first to cross the Danube, and had seen very little damage done except in the lower town near the trenches; and this I found subsequently to be quite correct, though I had heard sensational accounts of the whole city having been laid low as far as the King's palace. These men all hated the war. They were most anxious to know if I had any news, and said that they never got any at all. "There is no news," said one. "All that is happening now is happening in Serbia." According to them England was the chief, if not the only, obstacle to peace. "What is the use of our talking about peace?" asked the youth who had brought us in. "If we do so England replies that she has not yet begun to make war. But perhaps," he added, with a happy touch of inspiration, "she will

still be saying that when peace is concluded." So far as I could see there was certainly no hatred in their attitude towards this country, though they were convinced that we were the victims of some curious moral or mental perversion. On the other hand, some irreverence was apparent in their references to their friends the Germans. The force at Kruševats—a German force—was referred to as a different army. These men were gentlemen: there was not the slightest doubt about that.

After our breakfast M. and I went out to look for our fellow-prisoners, but we could find no trace of them. We were allowed to wander about quite freely. M., who was now a changed man, was confident that here at least they would be fed and decently treated; but I have ever since regretted that I did not bring forward the case of the boy with the crooked back. Something might surely have been arranged, but I forgot him. We did not return to lunch, but left at midday armed with our "permit," which provided that we should proceed direct to Vrnjatohka Banja, and that if we were found anywhere out of the route laid down we should be conveyed there under escort. It was a long tramp, through several streams, after we had crossed the Morava on the new Austrian bridge, and through maize-fields deep in mud, until we reached the main road from Kraljevo. The desolation of the scene

here was pitiable. Not a soul was to be seen. Every house was closed, and from within came the sound of women wailing for the men who had gone, and for their country which had been conquered. There had been no atrocities, no massacres, no pillaging, nothing about which sensational articles could be written with even a grain of truth in their composition; there had only been the perfectly normal and inevitable consequences of glorious war. The men had gone; their property had been requisitioned, receipts being given in due course; and the women wept for Serbia. Occasionally one came to the door and hailed us as we passed. "We like to see friends again," they explained. "We have seen none but enemies for

days, and thought that all our friends had gone." We reached Vrnyatchka Banja as it grew dark, tired out but glad to be back, even though we now found the town in the occupation of Austrian troops.

And so our adventure ended. Milan I never saw again. The car visited Vrnyatchka Banja occasionally. The Red Cross had been blotted out, and it was now used for the conveyance of officers, a formal receipt being ultimately given to its former owners. But there was a new driver, and months afterwards I heard that Milan was interned somewhere in Hungary. I suppose the authorities had come to the conclusion that on the whole he was safer there.

R. C. G.

ON INFORMING SUBORDINATES.

BY F. I.

"For to say that a blind custom of obedience should be a surer obligation than duty taught and understood, is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide than a seeing man can by a light."—BACON : Advancement of Learning.

IN war, secrecy is a good servant but a bad master. When the passion for it runs riot, discrimination tends to become lost, and a point is reached at which all those concerned in the active conduct of a war are acting in the dark, ignorant of the reason why they are called upon to submit to sacrifice, to put forth their utmost strength, or to do as they are ordered. This infallibly spells mischance. It is applicable equally to whole peoples or to small detachments of fighting forces. The man who thoroughly appreciates the situation and who knows the intentions governing the action of his superiors, can interpret those intentions in terms of execution far more completely, because more intelligently, than he who has merely to obey an order of which he knows no more than the mere words in which it is couched. This is so much a truism that it should seem upon the face of it unnecessary to call attention to it, yet in practice it is one that is more frequently honoured in the breach than in the observance, and commanders of great experience and distinction have upon various occasions marred the success

of brilliant conceptions from neglect of it.

Where the failure fully to inform the executants of an operation of all the factors which influence it arises from distrust of subordinates, it argues either that the commander himself is ignorant of the importance of fully informing his colleagues, or that he distrusts their powers of executing his wishes, and therefore desires to retain in his own hands the full direction of affairs. If he so distrusts them it means that he considers them untrustworthy or incompetent, in which case he has either failed properly to train them and render them competent, or to have them replaced by better officers. His, therefore, in such a case, is the blame. If a chief commander—which may be Government in the case of grand strategy or a comparatively junior officer in the case of minor tactics—has not confidence in his subordinates, any decentralisation of command is impossible. Without decentralisation, initiative—that factor which so often has determined victory—is impossible, and the order for every movement must emanate from the central control. Then,

when an unexpected situation for which directions have not been provided or cannot be given arrives, the individual commanders become like the lawyers, "not grounded in their books," referred to by Bacon, "who are many times easily surprised when matter falleth out beside their experience, to the prejudice of the causes they handle."

There are no better-known examples of men being surprised "when matters fall out beside their experience" than those furnished by the skirmish off Toulon in February 1744 or Rodney's battle of April 17, 1780. In the former of these Admiral Mathews, a proud and self-contained man, who kept all his officers at arm's-length, finding himself unable to get into the position from which he could attack the enemy in accordance with the method prescribed by the fighting instructions of the day, was obliged to deliver his attack in a different manner. In the unexpected situation in which this placed his captains, many of them were at a loss how to act, since no instructions existed to provide for such a case. The Admiral had never discussed the tactics of the fleet with his captains, nor even with his vice- and rear-admirals. Indeed, so far as his vice-admiral was concerned, this officer had been kept in complete ignorance of all that was passing in the Mediterranean campaign. The night before the battle he had come on board the flagship to request directions concerning the im-

minent engagement, and had been dismissed with the curt remarks that there were none to give, that it was a cold night, and that he was wished good-evening. For months the Vice-Admiral had never been in the confidence of his Admiral, and had chafed at the unsympathetic treatment. Thus the same cause—lack of confidence in subordinates—acting through different channels, was instrumental in leading what should have been a victorious action to degenerate into an indecisive skirmish. The second-in-command, disappointed and jealous, took no pains to hasten into action; some of the captains, doubtful as to how they should act, through ignorance of their chief's intentions, interpreted their instructions in different ways, so that an attack which furnished the opening for an effectual and possibly decisive concentration on the enemy's rear melted away into a few single ship combats and remains a byword in our naval history.

In Rodney's action Captain Carkett misunderstood his commander-in-chief's intention to attack the rear. A signal had been provided for the intended manœuvre. "When the commander-in-chief means to make an attack upon the enemy's rear he will hoist, &c. . . ." After skilful manœuvring Rodney placed his line in position, and made the signal to lead down upon the enemy, keeping station on the Admiral. But the intention was not grasped by the Captain of the van ship, a brave

and gallant seaman, who led down upon the enemy's van. It is idle to say that the meaning *ought* to have been clear to Carkett, or that by his stupidity or other fault of character he spoilt Rodney's well-planned opening. The fact remains that he did not understand it, and that not he only but the majority of the captains in the van were in the same state of misunderstanding. This was because Rodney never took his subordinates into his confidence. He provided signals, and expected unquestioning obedience to the letter of them, and his captains not being fully *au courant* with the workings of his mind served him ill when the looked-for moment arrived. "Do not let us depend upon signals," says a recent French naval writer, "for our action in battle. What matters is not that a signal can be executed, but that the thoughts of the Admiral, common to all, *hovering over the battle, should be interpreted and put into practice.*"¹

The same writer expresses the idea at greater length in another place. "Guided by this common doctrine, bound to apply the regulations with which all the elements under his command are familiar to the point of instinct (which is in no sense a restriction upon his free will), the Commander-in-chief is yet under another obligation towards his subordinates—viz., that of informing them of his intentions in order that each may co-operate with

all his energy and all his intelligence. He must also discount in advance the effect of surprise upon us, prevent the effect of an unexpected blow being doubled by an unexpected order. He must explain to us before the battle how he proposes—*D.V.*—to adapt regulations to realities according to the circumstances of the battle. . . . If the first point is to take in an order quickly, the second is to assimilate it quickly, and the third to do it on the spot. Rapid assimilation requires that every one should know, *fore-know*, the chief's plan. Orders and signals should merely be to confirm, perhaps to complete, but at most only to modify, the idea embodied in the memorandum—the idea that every one has turned over and over in his mind until it has become his very own to carry it out."

Baudry's remarks are clearly based upon a study of Nelson's methods. The reference to surprise is in obvious relationship to Nelson's remarks to Keats that he intended to "surprise and confound" the enemy, while the previous explanations by the Admiral to his captains are what Nelson invariably practised. With him there was no secrecy, and among the sources of his greatness none is more remarkable than his habit of taking his commanders fully into his confidence and informing them to the utmost as to his intentions. "I never conversed with any officer of his fleet," says Sir

¹ A. Baudry, *La bataille navale*.

Byam Martin, "without hearing the most hearty expressions of admiration of his conciliatory manner to all, and his frank way of conversing with his captains respecting the movements of the fleet." It was surely this habit of frank converse that enabled his captains so readily to translate his intentions into executive action, confident that they were doing what he would have desired them to do. If we contrast Nelson's practice with that of Mathews or Rodney, the difference in method is no less remarkable than the difference in result. The surprising completeness of the Nile victory—although Calder said Nelson ought to be punished for fighting in a manner different from all preceding battles—was the direct result of the numerous conversations with and explanations to his captains. So again at Trafalgar, Nelson had prepared his major tactics beforehand, his captains were fully seized of his intentions, and when the fleets met, although the situation was entirely different from that presupposed in the memorandum, the plan was sufficiently elastic, its governing principles sufficiently understood, for his officers to interpret his ideas and apply the principles he had explained to them.

A direct corollary to this confidence which Nelson reposed in his juniors was the confidence with which, it would seem, they reposed in him, not hesitating to offer suggestions

because suggestions were not repelled. Frankness induces frankness, and so far are we all from infallibility that criticisms or suggestions helpful to the senior may be drawn from the junior. An unduly reserved attitude, such as that of Rodney in his lonely furrow, quickly operates to repress both spontaneous thought and its communication. Few men enjoy being snubbed; most are induced to work harder by the flattery of recognition and encouragement. One well-administered rebuke, suggesting that opinions are not required until they are asked for, will effectively chill any enthusiasm for suggestion, or even for giving any more thought to the problems of the moment. With Nelson, suggestions were treated differently. Not only was it no crime to make them, but he took pains that he who offered helpful opinions received the credit for them. "It is right also," says Mahan in his appreciation of the *Agamemnon - Ça Ira* engagement (March 13, 1795, *æt. sud* 37), "to note the accessibility to advice, a feature of his genial and kindly temperament, to which he admitted much of his success was due.¹ The trait is not rare in mankind in general, but it is exceptional in men of a character so self-reliant and decided as Nelson. 'If the conduct of the *Agamemnon* on the 13th,' he generously wrote, 'was by any means the cause of our success on the 14th, Lieutenant Andrews has a

¹ Writer's italics.

principal share in the merit, for a more proper opinion was never given by an officer than the one he gave me on the 13th, in a situation of great difficulty.'” But if Nelson had withheld information and denied confidence to his officers, had kept aloof from them, and had not encouraged thought and suggestion on their part, he would never have received this very “proper opinion” from Andrews. A comparison between Nelson and Rodney in this respect is unavoidable. Readers of the letters of Lord Hood will recollect his description of the relations between that Admiral and his First Captain, Sir Charles Douglas, upon whom Rodney’s chilling manner seems to have imposed a fear of making any suggestion. “In a great fleet the duty of a first captain is that of being an honest and candid counsellor and adviser to the commander-in-chief, and there ought to be a most perfect good understanding with, and confidence in, each other.¹ . . . Sure I am that if Sir George Rodney was to give orders in his cabin for any signal to be made, which would inevitably throw the fleet into the greatest confusion, or even into danger, Sir Charles has not fortitude and resolution sufficient to open his lips in remonstrance, but would most implicitly obey it.” How far this was Rodney’s fault for an overbearing manner, or Douglas’s for one that was too

subservient, cannot be said. But any one with experience of human nature will know that the attitude of the senior towards criticism will generally determine the attitude of the junior towards making any. That Rodney did not take his subordinates into his confidence we have already heard. The manner in which he was disserved by Douglas is only a manifestation of the effects of such aloofness.

A remarkable case of a failure owing to an admiral withholding information as to his intentions occurred in the Mediterranean in 1793.² On this occasion Lord Hood, that great and splendid officer, ordered some frigates upon a detached service, which he informed the senior officer was of great importance. This officer was Captain Lumsdaine of the *Isis*. The squadron under Lumsdaine was to go to Tripoli, carrying, among other things, some presents to the Bashaw, but on her way thither a frigate was to be detached into Tunis to give a despatch to the Consul at that place. When near Tunis Lumsdaine detached the *Tisiphone*, Captain Martin, who proceeded towards the port; but when he opened the anchorage, to Martin’s surprise he observed a French squadron of thirteen ships of war at anchor. Without an instant’s delay he hauled out to sea and rejoined the Commodore, flying the signal for an enemy in sight.

¹ Cf. Mr Lloyd George’s speech on Cabinet relations.

² The full story will be found in the Memoirs of Sir Byam Martin.

Lumsdaine, after verifying Martin's report by a personal reconnaissance, decided not to send the *Tisiphone* into the bay. He considered that as the French had not respected the neutrality of a civilised port like Porto Praya—where Suffren had attacked Johnstone—much less would they respect an open bay on the Barbary coast where there were no forts to enforce obedience. Even if the French had paid respect to the Bey of Tunis, they would have been able to block the British ships in the port and so prevent the execution of the other order, which directed him to proceed without loss of time to Tripoli. From the general tenor of his instructions he concluded that the service of delivering a letter at Tunis was “not of that importance as to authorise me to risk the loss of any of his Majesty's ships and the convoy,” and conceiving that “a certain degree of discretionary power was vested in a Commodore of a King's squadron, or any person holding a responsible position,” he acted upon his own views of the matter, and sending a frigate to inform the Commander-in-chief of the presence of the French squadron, he proceeded upon his voyage towards Tripoli.

When Hood received this information he was furious. He knew all about the French squadron when he detached Lumsdaine, and the sending of the despatch to Tunis was a

trick. “I had fully calculated,” he said, “that the French Admiral would, in the rashness of his Republican feelings, have captured the *Tisiphone*,—at any rate, it was my plan to put the temptation in his way; and if the bait had been taken I was prepared to make a general sweep of the French ships of war out of every neutral port.” He tried Lumsdaine by court-martial for disobedience of orders. Lumsdaine was found guilty, but acquitted, the court considering that he was justified in disobeying orders in the circumstances.

Thus this unique plan for sweeping the neutral ports miscarried because Hood did not let his officers, who had the duty of executing it, into the secret. They went in ignorance, and acted in accordance with what seemed to them the necessities of the moment. But if Hood had trusted his subordinates and informed them of his plan, it is hardly possible to doubt, especially when Martin's fire-eating reputation is remembered, that it would have succeeded. The cheese would have been dangled so temptingly, perhaps so provokingly, that a bite at it would have been irresistible.

This episode furnishes an excellent example of the effects of neglect of a principle to which General Sir L. E. Kiggell refers in his new edition of Hamley's ‘Operations of War.’¹ “The commander of a detachment

¹ The Operations of War, by Sir E. B. Hamley. Edinburgh: Wm. Blackwood & Sons, p. 398.

has often a very difficult task to perform. To carry out his task satisfactorily he must have a thorough knowledge of the broad situation and of the plans of his General-in-Chief." Lumsdaine was given neither of these, and his detachment failed in its enterprise. If we look broadly at the operations of naval forces, we realise that in reality every outlying squadron is in a measure a detachment, whether it be a cruiser squadron working, say, in the North Sea, or a larger force such as the Mediterranean fleet. Nothing is more evident than that it was fully recognised in the past how necessary to a detached commander was full information concerning "the broad situation." The letters reprinted in the Barham and Spencer Papers and the correspondence in the State Papers show at what length the First Lords of the Admiralty, or the Secretaries of State, took pains fully to acquaint the Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean with the whole diplomatic situation so far as it could possibly affect the campaign up the Straits. The escape of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* into the Dardanelles tempts one to wonder whether the British Admirals in command were kept fully informed of the attitude of Turkey at that critical time, in order that they might be able to form a judgment as to the probabilities or the effects of these German cruisers arriving at Constantinople—or again, in Mesopotamia, whether the intended

scope of the operations and the part they were intended to play in the general scheme of the war were made plain to the general in command. If a Government takes pains to issue full, judicious, and carefully prepared instructions to its commanders, specifically setting out the object of the expedition, there is less danger that a force sent perhaps with a strictly defensive or containing object shall be led into a campaign of a wholly different nature. The preparation of the instructions themselves, from the endeavour to put the case as clearly as possible before the commander, will serve to assist the Government to clear its own mind as to what it wishes done.

Whether, then, we consider this question of giving full information to subordinates from the point of view of the smallest or the greatest operations of war, its necessity becomes equally obvious. Only a few examples have been given in this short review; they could be multiplied an hundredfold from history, and it is not improbable that the present war will furnish plenty of fresh examples. But it must not be imagined this habit of taking subordinates into either confidence or counsel is one which can be suddenly assumed, like a garment, in war. It must form a part of the training of officers in peace. They must learn to give confidence and to take counsel, and to respect confidence. One of the reasons most commonly given against

doing so is that if information is so given it leaks out. Bacon speaks of it as one of the inconveniences of counsel, "the revealing of affairs whereby they become less secret," but his remedies are clear. "Princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors, but may extract and select," and he shrewdly adds a comment, "but let Princes beware that the unsecreting of affairs comes not from themselves." If the complaint of Indiscretion in High Places which formed the subject of a letter in 'The Times' was justified, it would seem that Bacon not inaccurately judged whence much of the leakage came, that nature has not greatly changed in the last 300 years, and that the high officers who deny information to their juniors

and keep them in ignorance would do well to make sure that their own lips are sufficiently padlocked in public conversations. But this, in any case, must be made a matter of habit. It must be instilled in the young, and taught to them so that the preservation of secrecy of essential things is as natural to them as any other custom. It is, in fact, a question of training, to which far too little attention is usually paid in these materialistic days. The result to which we lay ourselves liable is that seniors, knowing themselves to be lax, do not trust juniors — that secrecy becomes a fetish, and that important information, essential to the successful conduct of war, is withheld from the very people to whom knowledge of it is most important.

SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA.

I. A NAVAL OCCASION.

"HERE, — have a look at this! It's something in your line."

I took a filthy scrap of paper from the subaltern's hand.

"Where did you get this from?"

"That's a bit of a mystery. A trader, the fellow over there with the red fez, got it from somebody else and gave it to the sentry. But I can't extract anything else out of him. He says he does not know—but what's it all about?"

I scanned the ungrammatical, badly-screwed letter in an alien language, obviously penned by some mission-trained native.

"This," said I, "comes from the enemy. He sends his compliments, prays to Allah that eternal flames may devour us, and informs you that if you will only come over the river it will please him greatly, since he longs to see your red blood stain the earth, even as a goat's skin is dyed in the tanner's pit. That is, if you have blood in you, which the writer doubts. There is no signature, and your friend the trader is not likely to give us particulars about its origin, although he probably knows a good deal."

The subaltern cast his eyes over the great brown river that separated us from the enemy. The farther bank was shrouded in mist, and half-screened by a chain of islets. It was high-

water, towards the end of the rainy season. Great marshes, covered with reeds and forests, extended along the river-sides. The waterway was passable only at a few points where strips of terra firma came down to the banks, or where a deep creek or tributary enabled light craft to cross the flooded area and reach solid rising ground beyond it.

Military operations were almost impracticable. A crossing of the main river might have been effected easily, but the subsequent work of pushing across the bottomless swamps, intersected by deep branches of the main artery, was too hazardous for either side to attempt. So both awaited low-water in the coming dry season, when, aided by a tropical sun, all these aqueous obstacles would speedily disappear. Both had scattered a chain of posts along the banks, and a flotilla of armed craft had secured to us the command of the waterway. No mean advantage. The orders were to avoid all collisions with the enemy as long as he made no attempt to interrupt our water-borne traffic, which was fairly safe if it kept to our bank and passed certain dangerous points in hazy weather, or with escorts.

The faint distant splash of a stern-wheeler broke the silence, and presently one of these self-

propelled tea-trays, oil-driven, and drawing about a foot of water, came slowly round a bend towing a couple of steel lighters and sending cascades of yellow flood-water over her wheel-screen as she laboured against the stream.

"The very thing," said the subaltern. "Verily, Allah has sent this."

I took no notice at the moment of this remark, and presently the *Fatime* splashed alongside our rickety temporary wharf. I noted a maxim at her bows, nestling among a pile of sand-bags; and from a medley of gesticulating natives, cases of stores, and biscuit-boxes, a keen-eyed officer of the Colonial Flotilla stepped ashore and greeted the subaltern as an old chum.

I marshalled a gang of labourers, and got busy landing cargo after wading through complicated bills of lading invented by the Evil One in one of his humorous moments. It was dark when we had carried all the stuff about quarter of a mile landward to a miserable village, across a slippery causeway. Here we were quartered, and for sheer beastliness give me a sojourn at Ohim in the wet season. Puddles of water everywhere; the squelching mud clung to one's boots. The sanitary arrangements were uncomfortably close to the houses, which were surrounded by stagnant water. By day the place, cut off from all breeze by a sea of tall reeds, was stifling hot and swarming with flies. At night it hummed with blood-

thirsty mosquitoes, and the native troops suffered from malaria almost as much as Europeans. A track across the swamp towards the distant foothills, which could be reached by splashing knee-deep through water for a mile, crossing a number of crazy temporary bridges, and staggering over a series of buttery clay embankments, accounted for the presence of our detachment.

You can imagine how we welcomed a guest in the shape of Trench, the skipper of the *Fatime*, even only for a single night. The subaltern and myself had long ago exhausted one another mentally. Over a dinner of fish, roast plantains, and tinned apple pudding, we pumped the new arrival dry of all the latest news, and indulged in a good grouse, so dear to the heart of all Africans, with a cheroot to season it. Later on I got up to bring my letters for posting, and as I came back saw the epistle which had excited passing interest that morning on the table. "It can't be done," said Trench emphatically; "I cannot afford myself the luxury of losing my ship." Then I knew that "divilment" was afoot. We puffed away at our cigars and the topic changed.

As we broke up to go to rest in our narrow camp-beds under the hot mosquito-nets, I followed the subaltern.

"What are you up to—pardon my curiosity, but——?"

"The fact is, I am going to accept this morning's invita-

tion," he broke in. "Those chaps are asking for trouble, and they're going to get it."

"I object most strongly; it's strictly against——"

"Yes, you pompous old thing—I know all about that; fortunately, you have no authority to stop me, and a day away from you will be heavenly after three weeks of your advice."

He strolled off whistling to go his rounds before turning in.

"Tropical liver," I murmured; "why do they send such youngsters out here?"

From my hut I presently saw the subaltern stroll into Trench's shelter with a native sergeant, and then I knew what I was in for.

It was dark and clammy on the wharf just before dawn. A fetid mist lay over the river, and the brown waters swirled between the rotting piles. The *Fatime's* blow-lamp was roaring softly. Presently Trench and the subaltern, followed by a dozen men, came along.

"I'll do my best for you," said Trench, "but I can only give you a tow up, and I shall leave the rest to you."

"That'll suit A1," said the sub. "Hello, old thing, I knew you'd be a sportsman and come too."

This compliment was for me. Having become an accomplice, I was taken into confidence. A raid was to be made on a landing-place of the enemy two miles up-stream. It was necessary to reach that point before the sun came out and dispelled the mist. The *Fatime* was to help us to accomplish this.

She often passed Speeke Point, and was not likely to attract much hostile attention. Three clumsy-looking native canoes, each with six almost naked paddlers, were lashed alongside the stern-wheeler; the soldiers tumbled in, nursing their brand-new Lee-Enfields carefully between their knees, and off we went. All chattering was sternly suppressed, and we chunked along steadily, hugging the bank on our side for twenty minutes by my watch. A barricade of biscuit-boxes protected the oil engine and its dusky attendants. A couple of darkies, looking exceedingly quaint in blue jacket's rig out, squatted by the maxim forward. We stood on the bridge, which was protected by screens of boiler plating.

"Some day," said Trench, "those fellows"—he jerked his head towards the enemy's bank—"will plant a field-gun over yonder and knock one of these sardine tins into a cocked hat. Now, boys, get into your canoes and shove off."

The subaltern and myself each took charge of a canoe, and the sergeant played cox' for the third. The tow-lines were cast off, we dropped astern of the *Fatime*, and paddled stealthily to a half-submerged island in mid-stream. Rounding it carefully, we scanned the now visible bank. The paddlers were grey with fear, and were kept silent only by awful threats which we could never have carried out. Had it not been for the fear of crocodiles they would have jumped over-

board, I think. We could probably be seen from the far bank now, but in the mist our craft were possibly taken for fishing or trading canoes.

Meanwhile the noise of the *Fatime's* engine and stern-wheel had died out. No doubt if the enemy had taken the precaution to line the beach in force while she was abeam, they would stroll off once she was out of hearing. We pulled with long, soft strokes into the reeds alongside the bank and waited. After an interval of quarter of an hour the paddlers got out bamboo poles. We were in a back eddy, and almost without effort the canoes nosed their way up to the landing-beach, indicated by a number of canoes sunk with their gunwales almost submerged to hide them from our river gunboats. Let me tell you the truth: I heartily regretted the rash undertaking at that moment, and expected a point-blank volley at any second. Ten yards below the beach the subaltern turned his canoe sharply into the reeds and leapt ashore. By good luck the water came right to the top of the bank. I followed suit, but got tangled up in a gnarled branch and sprawled full length into the mud. I got up to my feet and pushed through the green screen. The soldiers were scattering into the bush with inherent instinct. Just ahead lay a small hut, and the subaltern made for it in a flash with a couple of men. As I came on to the scene they had pushed inside of it. Six very much bewildered-looking enemy native auxiliaries were

trying to grasp the situation. The subaltern circled his heavy revolver over them and with difficulty waved back his own men, who were itching to slay their helpless foes. We could not speak to them nor they to us. But few signs were needed. I collected their rifles, which were stacked in a corner, and carried them outside. We left two men over them as sentries, and passed on. The greatest danger was over; we had caught the enemy napping. There was a hurried consultation. Then the native sergeant stripped off his uniform and went off like a cat along the pathway that led to the inevitable village behind the landing-beach. It seemed hours before he came back. Then we filed off behind him, the men with fixed bayonets and charged magazines. Leaving the direct path the sergeant led us on a side track into a clump of bananas. We had got right to the outskirts of the village when an old woman raised a cry of alarm, and then we went forward at the double, our men blazing off as they ran. It is a bad and dangerous habit, but I will say it helps to create panic, and that is what was required in this case. We achieved it too. In two minutes there was not a soul left in the place. The African soldier fires wildly, and an enemy dodging off between trees is hard to hit, so we bagged no scalps, but the yards and alleys were littered with arms and equipment. A hot breakfast, enough for forty

soldiers, was ready cooked in the houses, and great yam-stacks and a pen full of goats betokened that the supplies of quite a respectably sized post had fallen into our hands.

Grinning, chattering, and gesticulating wildly, our men started to collect the booty. Alas, it was not possible to carry off much. The seconds were precious.

"Now then, old chap," I yelled to the subaltern, "five minutes and no more is the arrangement."

He was busy cuffing the would-be looters, and presently hurried with over half the men to piquet the village exits. I hastily set to work with the remaining four to pile up all hostile property in sight on to a heap of firewood, and soon it was blazing merrily. The outfit of the enemy's leaders must have been at some other point, as we failed to find it. We next fired the huts, and a loud explosion told us a little later that the flames had found the enemy's spare ammunition which a hasty search had failed to disclose. The yam-stacks were also entirely ruined by fire, and the goats had to be destroyed. War is cruel.

To have stayed long would have been rash. We had no idea what numbers the enemy might not have been able to rally quickly, and a single wounded man would have been a serious handicap. Besides, our undertaking was a private one. The subaltern sent to me to fall back to the river, as a hostile force was working up through the bush. We walked

rapidly to our canoes and got ready to clear, tossing the captured rifles into our craft. With an axe we smashed the gunwales and bows of all the enemy's canoes. Presently the subaltern with the rear party joined us. There was no room for prisoners, so we now drove them into the bush to tell their commander any lies they wished, as to why they had not been able to give the alarm.

"Hurry up," said the subaltern, "they're on top of us."

We shoved off and paddled out into the river for dear life. It was clear daylight now, the sun shone, and we made a fine target on the water. Presently a shot rang out, and then another, and more. The first bullets hit the water wide of the mark, but it was uncomfortable, as the unseen enemy got the range better each moment. Should we get off scot-free? The sharp crack of woodwork and a bubbling of water told that my canoe was hit, and the water ran over my boots in a moment. The soldiers with me were blazing off wildly towards the enemy, whilst I tried to direct the paddlers to get under the lee of an island. Just then those of the canoe in which the sergeant sat lost their heads as a bullet sung between them. With a cry of despair they jumped overboard and dived for safety as they swam to the island to seek shelter among its reeds. The other canoes checked. Matters looked ugly. At that moment the rapping of a maxim broke in on my ears. Hurrah, the *Fatime*

was sweeping down-stream on the turgid flood, pumping lead on the enemy. In a couple of minutes her hull screened our canoes, and as she ran past us we all hung on to her for safety and were rapidly carried down-stream, out of range and back to our own post.

"Couldn't leave you boys in the lurch," said Trench; "just lay round the bend behind an island and waited to see what would happen."

"No," I said dryly, sipping

a cup of cocoa on the bridge—"I never heard of the Navy leaving anybody in the lurch," and that was the highest praise I could give him.

"I wrote a note and pinned it up at the village entrance," said the subaltern later on, as we stepped ashore and once more bid the *Fatime* good-bye—"their invitation to come and be killed was attached to it. My letter stated that I hoped they had enjoyed the call as much as we had done."

II. AN AFFAIR OF OUTPOSTS.

We had made ourselves fairly comfortable under some fine old shady trees in shelters covered with mats plaited of palm-leaves. The enemy had not dared to molest us. The Captain said that our detached company was pushed out on the extreme right flank of our main force. Our rôle, he added, was to remain actively on the defensive; and as long as that meant resting my sore feet after a never-to-be-forgotten 200 miles' trek through the bush in a blazing sun, I was quite contented to help to play it. We lived well on the resources of the country, and spent the time smoking and discussing the fragments of news that filtered through to us, mostly sadly mutilated. I had clean forgotten that there was anything else to do when the subaltern came into my shelter one morning.

"What is it to-day, my lad? Don't say you've come

for another loan of tinned salmon or chocolates, but if a yam is of any use to you——"

"No, it isn't that. The fact is, I'm going over there," and he waved his hand in a southerly direction. "The Captain says you are to go with me, as you might be useful. That's an absurd idea, of course, of the old chap's. Still, orders are orders, and I thought you'd like to know in time."

"The life of the past week has been too good to last; sit down and tell me what the game is," said I.

My visitor helped himself to a cigarette, and then explained. Our scouts reported the vicinity of a hostile patrol, supposed to be working from a native village in the quarter indicated. How far away the latter was nobody knew exactly, as the place was not marked on the map, and no aborigine can ever give an

idea of time or distance. All we did know was that a well-trodden track led from our camp to the hamlet through dense bush and abandoned overgrown farms.

The order was to drive out the enemy, if that proved possible, and occupy the place. This was to be accomplished by a surprise attack at dawn.

I got my clothes on somehow in the dark, damp, tropical morning, and felt less of a limp coward after pouring down the contents of a Thermos flask full of hot tea. There were to be no lights shown. The half company had fallen in. I groped my way to the rearguard, where the shivering carriers stood huddled together, and, with suppressed oaths and sharp taps of my cane *more Africano*, got them into line on the path where their head-loads were laid out for them. There were ammunition boxes, a provision case or two, some cooking utensils, the men's blankets, and a few odds and ends indispensable to Europeans in the tropics. The Captain gave the sub. a few parting hints in undertones, then the point slipped off noiselessly, the flankers pushed into the bush at the sides of the track with an eerie snapping of twigs, and the native sergeant-major gave the main body an order in a low, raucous voice. The enterprise was launched.

The path wound down a hillside. My boots crunched loudly on pebbly soil, and wet wisps of elephant-grass brushed my face. The black sky overhead was slowly turning to a leaden grey. Behind me were four soldiers, then the carriers, and six more soldiers formed a rear party. I remember wondering whether the subaltern¹ would get killed, and I thought out the letter I would write to his mother—or would this be the Captain's job? We had reached the bottom of the hill, and there crossed over a stream by balancing on a half-rotten log thrown across it. The leading carrier splashed loudly through the water—the accursed fool. All the others did the same before I could turn round and stop them. Then we were going uphill. Daylight had come, a few plantains, generally found close to habitations, told that we were near our destination, and my heart thumped. I ran into the connecting file.

From ahead there came a faint crashing sound as of something rushing off through the bush. I heard the subaltern shouting, and then came the crack of a rifle, followed by a long drawn-out rattling of bolts. In h—l's name why didn't we go forward, why was the path blocked? I learned the reason afterwards. The men had been carefully instructed not to load under pain of

¹ The subaltern, I regret to say, has met his death in another "Affair of Outposts," when the day went against us.

punishment before we left camp, but when the enemy's sentry gave the alarm they lacked the nerve to advance to close on the foe with cold steel alone, and instinctively halted to charge magazines. There was a moment of confusion and of hesitation. What a target we were for a machine-gun—what was the subaltern doing ahead?

I struggled off the path into a maze of yam-heaps and dashed up the hill, tearing through the tendrils of the yam-vines as I ran. The flankers and a few others who had kept their heads were well in front, likewise pushing on for all they were worth. There was just a desire to get the thing over quickly—anyhow—to end the suspense. Brown walls and thatch roofs appeared through the leafy screen. Bang-bang came the report of shooting from somewhere beyond. We scrambled over mounds of filth at the backs of the houses, narrowly avoided hideous cesspools, and plunged in between a maze of huts.

Emerging from a narrow alley I saw the market-place. Goats and inhabitants were scattering in all directions in wild panic. Half-right from a clump of bamboos a rifle flashed out, and our men coming up opened a furious fusillade in its direction. The subaltern, helmet in hand, was just disappearing in among the huts at the far side of the market-place, urging on the advance-guard with him. Thank goodness, the enemy had fled panic-stricken at the

first alarm of our approach, and our leader had given them no time to rally, but swept them out of the village with the few men around him. The sergeant-major and the main body had got up by now and charged into the bamboos. There was nobody left there, so the men spread out fanwise to picket the outskirts of the village or follow the subaltern. Long drawn-out whistling stopped the waste of ammunition going on. It was all over in less than three minutes, and we had not suffered a single casualty, nor had the enemy apparently. Our objective had been achieved, and I halted to draw breath. The carriers were herded into the village; a corporal with a couple of men was sent back to report our success to the Captain, and bring back some more creature comforts for us. Some half-dozen rather villainous-looking natives whom the soldiers had dragged out of their houses had to be interviewed. They protested that they were our friends, and perhaps they were sincere, though they would have told a victorious enemy the same thing. From their accounts I gathered that our antagonists had consisted of anything from six to twelve men. Native counting and information is hopelessly unreliable. They will lie when it is to their positive advantage to tell the truth. The enemy had been well armed, and had levied heavy toll on the village in the shape of live stock and foodstuffs. Presently the ser-

geant-major, with a broad grin on his face, brought up the odds and ends the foe had left behind—a cap or two, belts, cooking utensils, and a ragged uniform. We took a turn round the outskirts to see that all were well posted and alert, in case of a counter-attack by the enemy, and sent out some of our prisoners to bring back the scared villagers who, no doubt, were in hiding near by. The sergeant-major was sent off with a party to join the subaltern. I felt nervous lest the latter should rashly venture too far, but my own orders were to take charge of the place, and not go beyond it.

I don't know how it happened—whether any enemy stripped of his uniform and accoutrements was lurking somewhere among the houses, and had thought of a cunning dodge to escape in the noise and confusion that followed inevitably, or whether one of our own men did it by carelessness. It is never worth while in Africa to inquire into a *fait accompli*. There was a sudden shout of alarm. Black smoke was curling up from a hut right in the middle of the village, and before anything could be done to check the fire a billow of flame lapped up over the thatch. The morning breeze sent a shower of burning palm leaves over the neighbouring huts, and in a few minutes the houses around were burning furiously. A quarter of an hour later the south side of the village was a roaring furnace, roofs fell in

with a sickening crash, and a great pillar of smoke blotted out the rising sun. We had to let it burn itself out; the cries of frightened domestic animals soon died down; blackened clay walls enclosed heaps of red-hot cinders and charred roof-spars still flaming silently. Kites circled ominously overhead. I sat disconsolately under a palm gazing at the ruins of so many primitive but none the less probably happy homes. What a ruthless thing war was!

The sentry near me suddenly showed symptoms of tense watchfulness. Yes, unmistakably a low cry of pain came from the bamboo clump. A couple of men loaded their rifles and peered cautiously into it. A wounded African is often dangerous, fearing torture and death from his enemies. Presently they called for the carriers, and these brought out a dusky form after a slight scuffle and much shouting and laid it at my feet, whilst the soldiers produced the gun which had probably fired the last shot on the enemy's side that morning. Poor wretch, he had lain in agony for over an hour, silent, so that we might not find him, when we would have succoured him had we but known of his presence. I called for water and a first-aid bandage, and ordered the carriers to cut bamboos for a stretcher and cover the framework with plantain leaves. Kneeling down, I discovered that a bullet had entered the wounded man below the hip. His trousers were drenched with blood. We

made him as comfortable as possible, but could not force water down his throat. Help had come too late. He was soon speechless; slowly the eyes, which stared up at me, glazed, and the jaws relaxed suddenly. I was in the presence of death. Who was he? Where did he come from? Who would mourn for him? My reverie was interrupted by an exchange of whistling, and the subaltern, fresh as paint, came swinging across the market-place with a trophy in the shape of a sword-bayonet in his hand.

"The beggars have run for miles," he exclaimed laughingly, "and I'm as hungry as a schoolboy—why the deuce did you fire the place? The skipper will raise Cain about it."

I pointed to the blood-stained corpse on the stretcher, half hidden by the soldiers behind me. The subaltern stepped back, and his lips twitched. Brave to a fault, he was not yet hardened to the horrors of war.

"My God," he muttered, "take it away—quickly, and then—let's have some breakfast—and try to forget it." Instinctively we paid the only possible honour to those poor mortal remains, and doffed our helmets as they were carried off.

The shadows were lengthening. Our goods and chattels had arrived. At the tail-end of the carrier column was my cook cuffing my valet, a lad of twelve, and presently dragging him before me by the scruff of the neck.

"Look him, sah," he burst out vehemently. "Him heart no strong, he fear too much, but me go teach him sense, so he learn go war proper!"

The soldiers were poking about among the ruins of the burnt houses for anything that might come in handy. I joined them casually; perhaps some object of ethnological interest might be lying about, rarely shown to white men. An overpowering stench came from one of the huts. A glance betrayed its cause; there, huddled on a low clay bench, lay a blackened corpse charred out of all recognition. Some enfeebled old hag, perchance some person of unsound mind who had hidden here terrified at dawn, and been trapped by the flames subsequently? Who could say? Inquests cannot be held in war time. But if the enemy saw the body they would see to it that we were accused of frightful atrocities, so I ordered an immediate burial.

Returning to the market-place, I saw the subaltern stretched out on his camp-bed smiling happily over the portraits of beauties of the stage that greeted him from the pages of an illustrated paper.

The Chief of the village had approached our sentries, and as the coast was clear of the enemy he and part of his people had been permitted to come back into the village. Their services were necessary to us as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and we wished to make friends with them. The Chief listened half incredulously to my explanations that we had not caused

so much damage intentionally, but brightened up when I produced a handful of coins as a solatium.

"No," he said, "the enemy had never paid for anything they took, and the roofs could be built again in less than a month; he hoped that the King of England's soldiers would now protect him properly. But the village rang with the mournful wails of women when they saw that all their domestic treasures were destroyed. The stifling heat of the tropical afternoon slowly passed. Darkness fell. We lit a fire and sat around it smoking—to-morrow perhaps that long-hoped-for English

mail would arrive. The dew dripped from the palms, the cool of the night stole through the forest, tiny flames flickered in the burnt houses and dark shadows flitted in and out among them. From the outskirts came the raucous voices of our irrepressible and careless soldiery. The sergeant-major came up noiselessly and reported "all correct." Yes—there was a double sentry out on every path leading to the village, all exits between the houses were barricaded and walls commanding them loop-holed and bullet-proofed. Another square mile had been added to the Empire on which the sun never sets!

III. THE BETTER PART OF VALOUR.

The trees fell with a dull crash one after the other, and the sound of axes re-echoed through the gloomy forest. Parties of carriers interlaced the branches to form a screen and impenetrable barrier all around "number five post" on the line of communications, leaving only a few skilfully concealed exits. Another party were hard at it clearing up the foreground of all grass and undergrowth excepting only lianas and root-stems, which might help to check a sudden rush. This was Sergeant Yussufu's job, and he was really an artist at it, supplementing the obstacles provided by nature here and there with a cunningly hidden sharply pointed bamboo to catch the impetuous in the face or on the point of the toes. I

was busy making head-cover behind our primitive obstacle, known in text-books as an "abattis," with rice-bags, palm-matting filled with earth, and anything else available. A line of communications in Africa is entirely different from what you expect in Europe. In the latter it is, or should be, a route protected at every point along the whole of its length from base to fighting line. If it were attempted to institute anything similar in tropical warfare, with its stupendous distances and liliputian armies, there would be no troops left to do battle at the front. All that can be done to assure communications is to scatter a chain of posts along the track where columns of head porters marching with escorts can

obtain food and protection at nights, and their leaders information as to whether the route is likely to be clear ahead.

Number five post lay many miles from either four or six, in dense forest, and its site had been chosen with more haste than military skill (prior to our arrival) at a cross-road each branch of which led to a native village close at hand. We had a sentry group in each of these. The subaltern and myself had been at breakfast that morning when Sergeant Yussufu came up. The relieved men of the outposts reported that the inhabitants were clearing out with their women and children, and driving their cattle away. This was ominous, although proof of the vicinity of an enemy was lacking. We knew that all information from native sources was thoroughly unreliable. They lived in mortal terror of the enemy. To give a fake alarm and call for reinforcements was hardly justifiable under the circumstances. We adopted the mean course of hastily reducing the area of our camping ground, which had been too large to defend, and strengthening what remained with frantic speed. It was unlikely that we had anything more formidable to deal with than a raiding party with small arms. Our task was completed towards sunset, and our weary soldiers and carriers were beating up their evening meal of yams in great wooden mortars borrowed from the villages. The subaltern posted sentries. We had withdrawn

from the villages, being too weak to dare to risk the loss of a piquet. Every man had been carefully shown his post in case of alarm. I visited our prisoners, six low-looking types of native from some place in the near hills. They had been caught at different times loitering suspiciously round the post, and we had detained them as being without a doubt enemy spies. Unfortunately no available interpreter knew their dialect, so that intercourse with them had proved to be almost impossible. They lay huddled on a bed of palm leaves, glowering like trapped beasts. All attempts to get their confidence by kindly demeanour on our part had failed.

Slowly the gloom of night spread over the vast forest. No moon shone forth to relieve its uncanny blackness. Weird cries of monkey, owl, and leopard echoed in the distance. The subaltern and myself were trying to read the latest paper from home by the light of a stable lamp. Suddenly the soldiers who had been lying about idly jumped to their feet, there was a loud crackling of twigs, and the sentries came tearing into the camp jibbering and gesticulating. Somebody kicked our lamp over and doused it. My cook rushed up and flung a bucket of water over the camp fire. The subaltern blew his whistle furiously and steadied the men. Something was flung over my head. I struggled frantically in the grasp of an unseen antagonist, until I realised that it was only the

cook dragging on a khaki shirt over my conspicuous white pyjama jacket, and my curses turned to blessings. He pushed a rifle into my hands, and I then took up my station at an angle of our defences. There was a tense silence. The soldiers nearest to me were peering through our abattis with rifles at the ready. Faint sounds as of something creeping up stealthily could shortly be heard in the bush, drawing nearer and nearer. Then the unseen attackers halted. Probably their keen native eyes could distinguish our obstacle across the twenty yards of clearing. Made so recently, its existence no doubt came as a surprise, and they realised that we were ready for them, and their courage evaporated. After a couple of minutes' hesitation a score of rifles cracked, and then the whole circle round took up the fire. Our own men, also losing control of their nerves, returned it furiously. For five minutes this display of fireworks lasted, and then as rifles became heated, died down until the subaltern's "cease fire" became audible above the din. The rattling of bolts alone continued. Somebody from the shelter of the trees ordered a charge. For a moment we all half rose up, clutching our guns tensely. We had but one man to every six yards of line to defend, and no reserve. A determined rush on the enemy's part, if supported by a detachment armed with machetes (long knives) to hack through the abattis, would have succeeded at any point. But the inky darkness

prevented all combined effort on his side, and the courage of African native soldiers at night is a negative quantity. Not a man moved forward, and presently we sank back under cover, reassured.

A long wait followed, orders were shouted, and then with a faint continuous rustling of grass, sounding like the receding of a wave on a gravel beach, the enemy withdrew.

I lay breathing hard for some time, then got up to see how the men around were doing. Not far away the carriers and prisoners lay huddled together in their shelters, jibbering with fear. The latter had endeavoured to shout to the enemy, and had been silenced by their guards with vigorous blows delivered with rifle butt-ends, as the subaltern told me presently. We met and consulted hurriedly in undertones. We had suffered no casualties, nor were we likely to have inflicted any. The firing had been hopelessly wild, and only a chance shot could have found a billet under such conditions, but our tents were riddled.

Nobody dreamt of sleep. The hours passed with leaden slowness. Insects buzzed in our ears and bloodthirsty mosquitoes irritated, and we lay on the ground or slipped furtively from point to point of the camp improving cover against possible enfilading fire after daybreak.

At last, however, I dozed, to awaken with a start at grey dawn. A cold shower of rain was drenching us to the skin. My cook was busy lighting a

fire with the aid of kerosene, and the sergeant was counting the spare ammunition with the subaltern. We were pale and unkempt after our vigil, and the subaltern looked worried. The soldiers were yawning, joking, and cleaning their rifles.

The abattis gave good cover from view from all sides, so I got up and strolled over to the subaltern. If it had occurred to us then that we were exposed at point-blank range to snipers in trees around, we should all have been much less unconcerned. I thought of that five minutes later. It came to me like a flash, just as the subaltern had finished summing up the situation.

"We only have forty rounds per man left after last night's folly," he said, "but fortunately they don't know it. I daren't ask anybody to try and get through to number four post until to-night. Then all we've got to do is to sit tight until Lawton's column comes up to chase those gentlemen back to the hills. There's plenty of food to go on with"—he waved his hand at the rice-bags—"and no danger of thirst while the rains last. Now for a cup of cocoa, and then we'll turn in."

"Here, steady on," I said; "don't underrate the enemy. If he has the happy inspiration to post a few good shots eighty feet above us, close to the edge of the clearing, and then charge supported by their fire, this place will be untenable, unless you expend a lot of ammunition, which you haven't got,

for reasons best known to the C.O., the T.O., and yourself. Besides, you've only got six hoes and four shovels to dig deep pits in heavy clay, which are the only thing to give us any sort of protection against fire from above from all sides. I'd prefer to die in the open to being trapped here. Yes, it's funny we didn't think of it yesterday, and that the enemy haven't thought of it yet, apparently. Operations of war are a mass of mistakes by both parties, and the one who makes the least number of bumbles wins, and is acclaimed as a heaven-born genius by his countrymen. Take my advice, and get out."

The subaltern never cares for this latter product of many years' sojourn in the tropics, but I will say that he takes it if he sees that it's sound. He cast his eyes up at the circle of great leafy trees towering above the camp, and glanced at the thin chain of our men.

"It's easier said than done," he put in; "let's have some more details."

"The enemy," I said, "certainly don't expect us to attack them; moreover, they can't see from one point of their circle what is going on at an opposite one of the perimeter. They probably know as little of our strength as we do of theirs. They made a march of some distance yesterday, and have lain out in the bush all night. Probably they are hungry and sleepy now, and have withdrawn their main force to watch the roads to and from

posts numbers four and six. If we make an energetic sortie at right angles to the line of communications we shall break through all right. We can then reach Lawton by a detour I know of, and retake this place easily, combined with his whole company and maxims."

We decided to act accordingly. We had to abandon a quantity of rice, which was flung into a pit full of water and covered with earth, then we loaded up our carriers, formed a strong advance party, and a rearguard behind the string of head porters. The subaltern moved off with the former after a hasty meal, during which Yussufu ascertained that the enemy were not any longer in the immediate vicinity of the encampment. I headed the carriers, and Yussufu followed last. Luck was with us. A few enemy scouts bolted as our point and flankers struck them just outside the post. The alarm was taken up all round, and a burst of fire showed that our now empty camp was the enemy's target, so we got well clear before any appreciable number of them had comprehended our manœuvre and attempted to attack the rearguard. We moved at a lively double, scrambling over fallen trees with more haste than dignity. I wondered what would happen at the village a quarter of a mile out from the camp, which we must go through. Emerging breathlessly from a ravine, I saw to my relief that the advance-guard was pushing right through it. A minute

later and my party were in a lane between closely packed huts. This passage was only three feet wide, and a cross-street branched off it about half-way down the alley. As I reached this point frantic shouting caused me to turn round, and this is what met my eyes. Jammed in an inextricable knot were our prisoners and their guards, the former fighting desperately for liberty. One of them had wrenched a bayonet from the soldier who was gripping him, and endeavouring to thrust it home. The passage was blocked to our carriers, who were huddling closely together behind the struggling group, fear written on every feature. In a few seconds they would fling their loads down and bolt to their own destruction, like panic-stricken sheep. Let me confess frankly that in our hasty departure we had given no order about the prisoners, and Yussufu as a matter of course had brought them along. Even then I would have released them, but in the din around, and being unable to speak the language of the captives, it proved to be utterly impossible to explain to them that they were at liberty if they would only cease fighting and run away up the cross-road. The whole occurrence probably did not last more than a minute, but the delay almost caused disaster. I stood hesitating what to do, when a bullet slapped into the clay wall above my head, and another, and more. The shots came right down the cross-

street. Our retreat was being cut off. My orderly turned to reply to the fire, but staggered back under cover. His rifle clattered at my feet.

"Look him," he exclaimed excitedly, holding up a bleeding forearm, "they do this for me."

I could not help smiling at his looking at the hurt as a kind of personal grievance for me to remedy, and picking up the rifle knelt down behind the angle corner wall of one of the houses. Glancing sideways, I saw some of the rear-guard men working their way down the alley, with bayonets fixed, towards the interlocked group of struggling figures which barred it. At the end of the side street a figure sprang up, ran towards us and halted in the middle of the road to fire at us standing. A moment later he collapsed. I have not been in the old Volunteers for nothing, and continued to ply with bullets any target that offered itself. Suddenly I noticed that the carriers were filing past behind me, and presently the rear-guard followed. Jumping up, I joined them. No, I cannot tell you what happened to those prisoners—I never looked round—I gave no order. Whatever our men did was done in self-preservation and to save our carriers. But I never asked, never wanted to know to this day, nor did anybody else. Perhaps they are still alive, who knows? We rallied in the dense bush on the far side of the village. The subaltern having taken the lead

in breaking through, now took command of the rearguard as the post of danger.

"Toddle ahead, old man," he said to me, calmly lighting a cigarette.

The crisis was over. The enemy only pursued a short distance. His force on the spot was weak, and probably complete confusion reigned on his side. If any one wishes to know what the phrase "The fog of war" means, let him fight in African Bush. We marched rapidly for six hours, not halting to draw breath, until an unfordable river lay between ourselves and the enemy. A roll-call revealed the loss of one carrier, but a soldier had saved the tent that had formed his load. Two soldiers were slightly wounded. At dawn next morning we reached number four post. Instead of being manned by a double company, we found it to be weakly garrisoned.

"The fact is," said the captain left in charge, "the major and one hundred and fifty men with two maxims left last night for number five. A native elephant-hunter came to our piquet and said you were all killed or captured."

"There," said the subaltern; "if it hadn't been for you we'd have been relieved all right and not have lost that precious rice. It's all your fault—own up like a man."

"Guilty," I said. "I throw myself on the mercy of the Court," and then we had a square meal.

EQUATORIAL.

TWO'S TWO.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

CHAPTER XVI.—BLACKMAIL.

"I MUST cure myself of even thinking about her," said Archibald to himself. "Unrequited love is a mug's game."

Inspired by this excellent sentiment, he took immediate steps to retrieve his financial position, very justly considering that as the foundation of a young man's career. He began by emptying the remaining sovereigns out of the canvas bag into his trousers pocket.

"Now that leaves the bag ready for a fresh start," said he, "which is what most good sportsmen have to do now and then."

With the empty bag in his new overcoat pocket he set forth in his green-upholstered car and visited in turn four of the shops where he stood highest in favour. At each of these he changed five shillings into coppers, till the bag was considerably stouter than it had been when it began its career. It contained, in fact, two hundred and forty pennies.

On his return to the Hotel Chic he carried it unostentatiously up to his room, and there inscribed very neatly and legibly on the canvas—"£500."

"Allowing for the difference in size between a brown and

a thick 'un, that ought to work out about right," he said to himself complacently.

He then very carefully and thoroughly tied and sealed the mouth of the bag, and finally descended in the lift, displaying it much more ostentatiously this time.

"I want to see the manager," he announced at the office with an important air.

The clerk eyed the bag, noted the legend (which happened to be so held that he could read it very easily), and deferentially conducted Mr Fitz-Wyverne to the manager's room.

"I say, Baron, old bird," said Archibald genially, "I want you to do me a favour."

He had become extremely intimate with the manager by this time, styling him "Baron" because, as he explained, he looked like one. The manager with equal cordiality expressed his pleasure in having the opportunity of doing Mr Fitz-Wyverne a service.

"I want you to take charge of this for me," said Archibald, throwing the canvas bag on to the table, where it chinked very pleasantly and audibly. "The fact being, Baron, I'm one of those fellows who can't be bothered with keeping accounts, so I

pay ready money always; and if I happen to see a picture or a motor-car or a diamond tiara or anything else, and take a fancy to it, I must have the dibs handy. I'll probably want to blue this little lot in the next day or two, but, till I do, I wish you'd keep it for me."

To so reasonable a request, made with so princely an air, there was, of course, only one answer. The manager took the bag and gave a receipt, which Archibald was a little disappointed to observe only acknowledged the deposit of a sealed canvas bag "marked on the outside '£500.'"

"I'd have had him beautifully if he'd only committed himself to saying the bag actually did hold five hundred pounds," he reflected. "However, I've undoubtedly inspired the proper confidence. Now for a crowded hour of glorious life! What a jolly thing it is to feel financially sound again."

Had he seen the manager gently but firmly pinching the bag all over and observed his extremely thoughtful look at the end of this process, Archibald would probably have felt that he might have inspired even more confidence if he had invested in four hundred and eighty halfpennies.

It did occur to him to look for the diamond trinket as an extra financial precaution, but the trouble of discovering in what direction Joyce's bedroom window looked, and after that making even further inquiries, struck him as ex-

cessive, especially for a man with a receipt in his pocket for a bag marked "£500." Besides, he had the kindest heart imaginable, and the idea of disappointing the fortunate finder by a churlish claim was really not to be thought of. So he lunched very pleasantly for the modest sum of two pounds, and decided on a stroll in Piccadilly.

It was then that for the first time he realised certain disadvantages in his position. For a young man of his social instincts pleasant companionship was quite essential. A solitary sportsman struck him as a mere contradiction in terms. Accordingly, when he observed two fashionably dressed gentlemen approaching him, and recognised them at once as friends of Sir Wyverne's youth, he stopped instinctively and gave them the cheeriest hail.

"Hullo, hullo, old nutlets!" he cried. "Whither away?"

To describe the gentlemen (a political peer and a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Brigade of Guards) as surprised would do considerably less than justice to their emotions.

"I am afraid, sir, you have the advantage over us," said the peer politely but not warmly.

"By gad, so I have!" said Archibald, beginning to realise the situation. "Well, the fact is, I'm a cousin of Sir Wyverne Warrington-Browne, and I've heard all about you both so often I thought I'd just pass the time of day, and so forth and so on."

"As you have now passed it,

sir," replied the Lieutenant-Colonel severely, "I should recommend you to move on before you get into trouble."

"And if I hear of your accosting any more of Sir Wyverne's or anybody else's friends I shall inform the proper authorities," added the peer.

"I was merely going to show you the way," replied Archibald quite calmly.

The peer's political habits made him incautiously inquire—

"The way where, sir, may I ask?"

"To the Zoological Gardens," said Archibald, "where you will find your cages awaiting you. Good-morning."

"Scored off them badly!" he said to himself as he strolled on. "At the same time, this kind of thing is rather a jar. I must choose my next bird a little more carefully."

He had just reached the corner of Hamilton Place when he exclaimed aloud—

"Got him!"

A gentleman who was waiting on the kerb for the string of buses to pass turned round at the exclamation. He was a broad-backed, sleek-haired, immaculately attired man, with a heavy blue chin and a curiously furtive look in his eye, as it fell on the stranger who had spoken his thoughts aloud.

"Mr Muldevon, I believe?" said Archibald, bowing politely.

Mr Muldevon nodded curtly, still with that watchful, shifty look in his eyes.

"Allow me to introduce my-

self as Archibald Fitz-Wyverne—a cousin of Sir Wyverne Warrington-Browne."

At the mention of this name, Mr Muldevon turned a shade less florid. His voice too seemed a little unsteady as he asked—

"And what do you want with me?"

"A private word. Shall we cross the street?"

For an instant Mr Muldevon hesitated, but Archibald had begun to lead the way across Piccadilly with such instant decision that he followed automatically at his shoulder. Without pausing, Archie passed through the small gate into the Green Park, and there under the shade of the trees he turned and looked straight into the wary eyes.

"You once acted as stock-broker for Sir Wyverne, I believe?" he began, with the gravest air at his command.

"And supposing I did?" said Mr Muldevon.

"My cousin was devilish good-natured over that affair."

"What affair?" demanded Mr Muldevon, whose blue-chinned face had become a mask.

"That two thousand pounds, old chap."

Mr Muldevon's face became very intelligent, but none the less sinister.

"Sir Wyverne gave me his word he would tell nobody! We were old friends; he made allowances."

"He has told me," said Archibald. "And it would be deuced unpleasant if I passed it on, wouldn't it?"

For a moment Mr Muldevon looked at him in silence. Then, with an unpleasant air of accepting the inevitable, he said briefly—

"Name your price. What do you want?"

"To dance!" cried Archie with sparkling eyes.

"To make me dance, I presume you mean?" said Mr Muldevon grimly.

"Well, you can dance too if you like—but look here, old bird, the position is this: I'm rather at a loose end—most of my friends out of town, and so forth and so on—and I'm simply busting with beans. I didn't know exactly what I was going to get out of you when I tackled you—whether to make you dine with me or take you out to play golf somewhere, or what. And then I had one of the inspirations of my life. A dance—that was the thing! Can you manage it all right?"

His most intimate friends had probably never seen exactly the same expression on Mr Muldevon's face before.

"And after that?" he demanded.

"I don't quite follow," said Archibald.

"What else do you want?"

"Well," said Archibald, "if I still find myself at a loose end I might get a day's golf out of you. I've got a ripping car; I'd take you anywhere you like to go. But the dance is the thing at present."

"You are talking seriously? Remember this shock to my nerves is no joke for me," said Mr Muldevon, with a marked

relaxation of the strain apparent in his voice.

"Poer old chap! I'm really awful sorry," said Archibald with the most charming contrition. "It was deuced ungentlemanly of me, but if you only knew how dull I felt strolling along Piccadilly by my lonely self, you'd make allowances. Of course I'm talking seriously. Now, what about this dance?"

So open and engaging was Archibald's face, and so sympathetic his voice, that the wary look vanished entirely from Mr Muldevon's eyes, and instead of the curt and sinister person of two minutes before he suddenly revealed himself as an almost excessively rollicking blade.

"Spoken like a sportsman!" he cried. "'Make allowances.' Of course I will! Damn it, old man, the pleasure of making your acquaintance was well worth the shock to my nervous system! As for a dance, by gad, I'm taking my two girls out to a hop on Friday night—that's the day after to-morrow. How'll it suit you to come and join our party?"

"I was sure you were the man I wanted!" cried Archibald rapturously. "I've got a kind of instinct for knowing a good man when I see him!"

Mr Muldevon assured him he had precisely the same instinct, and had known Archie instantly as one of the best, and they parted on almost affectionate terms.

"I wonder whether it's more luck or good guidance?" thought Archibald as he walked

happily back again. "Anyhow, I'm undoubtedly a great success."

As for Mr Muldevon, his rollicking mood passed as

swiftly as it had appeared, and he fell exceedingly thoughtful.

"Well, we'll see," he said to himself finally.

CHAPTER XVII.—AN OLD FRIEND.

Musing happily on his exceptional luck, Archibald forgot to turn back into Piccadilly, and presently discovered himself still in the Green Park, shut off by the railings from the traffic and life of the street. There was not far to go before he came to another gate, but even this brief divorce from the enticing world beyond the bars struck him as an admirable instance of the melancholy way in which some fellows wasted their time. The habits of the late Sir Wyverne were a particularly sad example.

"To think of the fellow—practically *me*—mugging up scientific books and political pamphlets alone in his study!" he said to himself. "What a handicap Samuel was!"

Just before he arrived at the gate he perceived another sad instance—a man still on the right side of middle age, who seemed to prefer sitting alone on a bench to strolling gaily through the crowd. As Archibald's compassionate eye surveyed this figure, it noted, however, certain extenuating circumstances. The solitary's overcoat was sadly frayed at the cuff, one boot showed a loose flap where the upper ought to have joined the sole, his felt hat was of at least three shades of green; in short, he

was not quite suitably dressed for a promenade in Piccadilly. Still, sitting alone in the Green Park required a lot of explanation.

And then suddenly the solitary's face seemed familiar.

"It's poor old Jack Swinby!"

To pass an old acquaintance simply never occurred to Archibald. He would have hailed him at once, only his two recent adventures made him cautious.

"Fellows' nerves don't seem as strong as they used to be," he reflected.

So he seated himself on the bench beside the shabby solitary and began in a breezy conversational way, calculated to calm the most sensitive nerves—

"Jolly day, isn't it? I say, don't you find it a bit quiet here? Some fellows like it, I suppose, but it always seems to me rather a pity to waste one's fragrance on the desert air, etcetera."

The solitary looked at him dully. He had pleasant blue eyes, a little blood-shot; his chin was covered with a stubble of fair bristles; his air was apathetic; when he spoke his voice was monotonous but unmistakably that of a gentleman.

"I don't know that I'd call myself very fragrant," he replied.

"That will come all right," said Archibald encouragingly. "Give yourself a chance—that's all that's wanted."

"A chance!" said the other, with a note in his voice which touched Archibald exceedingly.

"You don't remember me, I suppose," said he. "But I know you quite well. You're Jack Swinby."

The solitary was roused this time. He sat up sharply, and there was suspicion in his eyes now.

"Who are you?" he demanded.

"A fellow you've met often—when you used to go to Warrington-Browne's rooms."

"That's an obvious lie," said Swinby bluntly. "It's twelve years at least since I last saw Warrington - Browne. You must have been an infant then."

"Oh Lord!" said Archibald. "These complications are really the deuce! Well, anyhow, my name's Archie Fitz-Wyverne, and you're going to dine with me to-night, and that's the fact of the matter, old bird."

"To dine with you to-night!" repeated Swinby with a laugh that was more melancholy than his apathy had been. "I don't know how you got hold of my name, but have you the least idea of my distinguished career?"

"Rather!" said Archie. "You were in the 35th Hussars, then you chucked the service and weren't very lucky,

and so on and so forth, and now I suppose—not to beat about the bush—you've landed on your uppers, as many another good sportsman has done."

"Good sportsman!" repeated Swinby sardonically. "It was the blank army who chucked me, and the blank police have made my acquaintance since, and you'd better keep your invitations for people who can accept them."

He turned away as he spoke, and then turned back and threw another curious glance on Archibald.

"Who the devil are you?" he demanded.

"That's neither here nor there," said Archie, jumping up. "You just wait here and I'll be back in half an hour."

"You'll probably still find me here if you call again at two in the morning," said Swinby with his uncomfortable laugh.

"Good Lord! Haven't you any rooms, Jack?"

"Jack!" echoed Swinby with a gust of laughter. "I have a room, Archie, my old pal, in a highly fashionable part of the town, but it has a landlord, and he has been making some uncivil inquiries about rent for the last month or two. My room isn't very healthy at present in consequence."

"Pay him a couple of quid on account," suggested Archibald, holding out his hand. "It's a loan, old bird; take 'em."

"A loan?" said Swinby, taking the sovereigns with a

hasty movement that almost suggested he was afraid they would suddenly vanish. "And when do you expect me to pay you back, friend of my youth?"

"Oh, I never let people pay me back under a year—that's to say, a year per quid—two years in your case. It's the interest I think of. Well, I'll be back presently. Be good!"

The fashionable apparition sped up the path to the gate and vanished in the crowd of Piccadilly, leaving an extremely perplexed waif on the bench.

In about half an hour the brilliant youth returned, this time carrying a small suitcase.

"Excuse my taking a liberty, Jack," said he, "but the fact is there's a fellow I'm going to introduce you to who's one of the best but a bit of a snob, and I thought I'd better fit you up first with a few etoeteras."

As he spoke he opened his bag and took out of it a hat, an overcoat, and a pair of boots.

"I had to have a shot at the sizes," he explained, "but they'll probably see you through the next hour or so. Stick your old things into the bag."

Mr Swinby stared at him hard.

"You don't look exactly the Salvation Army type," he said, "but I'm damned if I can make out what you're driving at otherwise."

He began to take off his boots while Archibald lit a

cigarette and seated himself beside him.

"What strikes me is," said he, "that people are extraordinarily easy surprised. For the last three days I've been noticing it. Of course I naturally want to produce a good impression; it costs no more—or at least only a fiver here and there, and it's a deuced sound form of philanthropy I always think. At the same time, I really don't see any good and sufficient reason for the wild flutter that seems to agitate the spectators whenever I appear. If I wasn't of a hopeful disposition I'd begin to fear that good men were getting scarce."

Mr Swinby's stare became more comprehending.

"Cracked!" he said to himself. "But it's not for me to complain."

In a new hat, overcoat, and pair of boots, and with a gleam of hope once more in his blue eyes, he looked a very different gentleman from the waif of ten minutes ago.

"Now," cried Archibald, "come on! My car's waiting for us."

He led the way into Piccadilly, his old friend following with the gleam in his eye still brighter. When he found himself in the green-upholstered car and they started eastwards, there appeared on his face for the first time the dawn of a smile.

"If I might venture to make a suggestion," said he, "this person you are going to be so kind as to introduce me to——"

"My tailor!" confided Archibald.

He perceived that he had caused another flutter of surprise.

"Your tailor!" gasped Swinby.

"My dear old bird, absolutely the first thing you need is a suit of evening clothes! That goes without saying."

He was distressed to notice how lugubrious his old friend's face had suddenly become.

"Evening clothes!" said he, and made a melancholy attempt at a laugh; "I *had* been thinking of a bit of supper."

"Supper!" exclaimed Archibald. "My dear Jack, it isn't lunch-time yet."

"I was beginning with the last meal I didn't eat," explained Swinby.

Archibald looked thoughtful.

"This is a bit of a dilemma," said he. "Even if we get you measured at once, it's making Pond work pretty hard to have your evening clothes ready for a dance to-morrow night."

"A dance?" said Swinby, in a low, and it seemed an awed voice.

"However," cried Archie cheerily, "it's clearly a case where an extra fiver is well spent. We'll have a hasty snack at the Chic, and see what Pond will do if I tell him to name his own figure. Hi, Jehu! Back to the Chic!"

The stout dark expert (who answered very amicably to "Jehu" for much the same consideration as inspired Pond & Co.) touched his peaked cap, and Mr Swinby's face began to clear again. He only ventured one more word of protest.

"About to-morrow night," said he, "the fact is I've been a little out of the way of going to dances——"

"You'll get into your stride again in two minutes, old bird. Hullo, here we are. Hop out! By the way, fizz is still your drink, I suppose?"

Mr Swinby hopped out and approached the revolving glass door of the Hotel Chic with the air of a somnambulist.

CHAPTER XVIII.—CAPTAIN SWINBY.

"Captain Swinby is going to have my other bedroom," Archibald announced at the office. "He's just back from the Antarctic, and so he's a bit short of luggage and so on, but one of the most distinguished."

"That makes it all right," he explained to his old friend. "Captains are always popular, and no one expects to see nuts landing from the Antarctic. Now for a few oysters and a bottle of fizz."

"Lend me a clean collar," whispered the newly commissioned Captain. "I'll have to lunch in my overcoat in any case, but they probably draw the line here at overcoats with their collars turned up."

They went up to Archibald's suite, and there the celerity with which his guest changed his collar and declared himself ready for luncheon met with his cordial approval.

"The sooner we get to Ponds, the better," he agreed.

"Yes," said his guest,—*"and to lunch."*

A five-course luncheon with two helpings of everything and the better part of a bottle of champagne produced the most gratifying transformation in Captain Swinby of Antarctic fame.

"You're a blank mystery, old chap," he chuckled, *"but the kind of mystery I like!"*

"If you like other people they always like you," explained Archibald.

The Antarctic adventurer looked at him curiously.

"That's your opinion, is it?"

"My plain and unvarnished."

"If you keep it for the next five years you'll be a phenomenon!"

"I'm a phenomenon already," said Archibald.

Thanks to Captain Swinby's antarctic record (as narrated by Archibald to Pond & Co., the staff of the Chic, and any others who he thought would be benefited by the information), certain peculiarities in his appearance were readily overlooked, and by the time their afternoon's shopping was finished and he was shaved and arrayed in a suit of ready-made tweeds, his old friend began to detect a reminiscence of the once dashing hussar.

"I say," he declared as they faced each other over a table in the gayest grill-room in London, *"you're a new man again! And now there's nothing to prevent your remaining so, is there, Jack?"*

"Well," admitted the Captain, *"I've had one or two weak-*

nesses to contend with hitherto, I don't mind confessing."

"You've probably grown out of them," said Archie, with great assurance. *"In fact, in my experience that's the worst of weaknesses. They tend to fade away."*

"Perhaps I'll find that has happened to mine," said the Captain optimistically.

"Sure to, old bird. Regrets for lost bad habits is all you're likely to suffer from now."

"You're the most encouraging fellow I've ever met!" declared Captain Swinby. *"I've given up trying to puzzle my brains as to who you are, but that's what you are!"*

"I'm awful pleased to be appreciated, Jack," said Archibald warmly. *"Speaking of my unanimous and unqualified success, I quite forgot to mention that I've just lost my best girl, and it's really most consoling to hear your kind words, etcetera. What shall we do now—a music hall?"*

The evening was very happily spent, and by the time he had supped, slept, and breakfasted in uninterrupted luxury, the distinguished Captain Swinby began to exhibit a degree of confidence worthy of his record.

"By Jove, I do believe my luck has actually turned!" said he. *"I think I deserve it too, for I've waited for a devilish long time."*

"Luck's generally a matter of habit," observed Archibald. *"In fact, once it begins the difficulty is how to stop it. You'll probably meet the maiden of your dreams to-night, and her oofy old uncle*

will die to-morrow, and there you'll be, old bird!"

"Then you're really going to take me to this dance?" asked the Captain, looking a trifle less confident.

"Rather! That was my very first thought when I saw you on that bench—How Jack would enjoy a dance!"

"It was the last thought in my own head," admitted his friend. "Still, I daresay my ballroom manners will come back to me once I get there."

"Once a gentleman always a gentleman," Archibald assured him. "That's the one bad habit which seems incurable."

CHAPTER XIX.—THE BALL.

Archibald's gracious intention of picking up Mr Muldevon and his daughters at their house had been communicated to them by telegram (Archibald believed in telegrams; they saved time, and time was money he said), and shortly after nine o'clock the Rolls-Royce arrived. Inside it were two such fashionable-looking gentlemen that the Miss Muldevons agreed at once that their father had selected their escort with admirable judgment. And at least one of the gentlemen was apparently equally satisfied.

"Lucky as usual!" exclaimed Archibald enthusiastically.

"Who is?" inquired Miss Julia.

"Me," said Archibald, "and you can guess why if you like."

Mr Muldevon changed the conversation at this point, rather tactlessly, Archibald thought. Still, he was sure he had made a good beginning.

As the gay party entered the ballroom, all on the best of terms already, Mr Muldevon and his elder daughter fell a little behind the others, and the jovial stockbroker's expression became for the moment a trifle less hilarious.

"Julia," he whispered, "I wish you would manage to find out something more about this young fellow, Fitz-Wyverne. Pump him a bit when you get the chance."

Julia, who was both a dutiful and a discreet daughter, nodded significantly.

Meanwhile fortune's favourite had already thrown his arm round the waist of Evangeline (a sophisticated debutante with a remarkable eye for what she termed toniness and nuttiness), and off they went to a rousing waltz.

The sensation they caused was exceedingly gratifying. The vanished Sir Wyverne's dancing days had fallen in a period of athletic waltzing, which was doubtless the reason why his lucky half whirled through the more sedately revolving crowd like a runaway gyroscope. With his coat-tails flying and his face radiant with joy, talking very loudly and cheerfully all the time, he spun round the room with prodigious velocity, while above the strains of the band rose intermittently the sound of a crashing bump and a genial cry of

"Sorry, old bird! My fault!"

Evangeline thought that she had never had so exciting an experience before, but she afterwards confided to her most intimate friend that it was actually eclipsed by her subsequent experience in a very dark and remote sitting-out place.

In fact, up till nearly the hour of midnight, Archibald's career was a succession of sensations for Society and experiences for his partners. As for his own feelings, they were blissful even beyond his expectations, and as he had expected a good deal, no better testimonial could be imagined. His only disappointment was his third waltz with Julia, such a pretty girl and so sympathetic up to that point. In the course of the first two waltzes he had grown possibly even more intimate with her than with any of the other charming girls, and had almost made up his mind to become temporarily engaged, but now she actually insisted on sitting in a corner, which, though out of earshot, was in full view of the superfluous public.

"I want to talk sensibly this time," she said.

"My dear Julia," cried Archibald (he called all his enslavers by their Christian names), "the only time for talking sensibly is before breakfast on an extra rainy morning. Otherwise no healthy man is ever sensible enough to talk about it."

"Girls are different," said Julia; "when they become friends with a man they like to know something about him."

"Well," said Archibald, "I'll tell you all there is to know about me in two minutes. If you split the difference between forty-five years and five days you get a kind of average for my age. Add one and subtract the previous figure and you get the number of my ideas, which simply consist of peaceful happiness; and as to how I made my pile—well, it was really done by another fellow, who made it by getting born of the proper parents, and then went bust under secret and sensational circumstances."

"Went bust!" exclaimed Julia.

"Yes, and I'm one of the bits. So, what ho! for a quiet corner? The rest of my confessions are confidential."

"I must speak to Dad for a moment first," said Julia. "Wait for me here."

"Gone to ask him whether it's safe to say 'Yes' on the strength of those revelations!" said Archibald to himself sagaciously. "This is a little too business-like for me. I think I'll get engaged to some one else instead."

When he received his daughter's report, Mr Muldevon seemed still unsatisfied.

"I might have a few words myself with Swinby," said he. "He seems a decent sort of chap."

When the next dance began he watched the various couples enter the ballroom, but there was no sign of the Antarctic Explorer among them. He wandered through the sitting-out retreats, but there was no

Captain Swinby there either. Then he tried the supper-room, and there at last he discovered the explorer very fortunately placed for a little conversation. He was, in fact, sitting quite alone in a corner of the room with a bottle of champagne on the table before him, apparently deep in meditation.

"Hullo, Swinby!" cried Mr Muldevon jovially. "On your own—eh?"

Captain Swinby rose rather carefully and deliberately he noticed, and made him a solemn bow. Then in a slow, measured voice he said—

"Sir, the champagne is our host's. Help yourself."

And with that he sat down again somewhat suddenly.

It occurred at once to Mr Muldevon that the opportunity was even more promising than he had ventured to hope. He sat down and filled his own glass.

"Here's to ourselves!" he said, raising it.

"Sir," replied Captain Swinby with the same measured utterance, "I am drinking this bottle to my friend, Archie Fitz-Wyverne. It is the least I can do for him—the very least, Mr—your name escapes me, but no matter. As I was saying, one bottle is the very least. In fact one is not enough. This is the second."

"He is an old friend, I presume?" inquired Mr Muldevon with a careless air.

"His age," replied the Captain profoundly, "is immy—immy—immyterial. You observe the word, sir? I chose it very, very, very carefully."

"I mean, you have known him a long time?" explained Mr Muldevon.

Captain Swinby became gravely confidential.

"My friend Archie assures me, sir, he has known *me* a long time, but I 'sure him I was un'voidably detained from being present at his birth, which must have happened just when he says he met me."

The Captain smiled pleasantly, drained his glass and very slowly and carefully refilled it, and having recovered from the strain of this operation, smiled pleasantly again.

"Then you don't know much about his past career, eh?"

"I know where he came from," said Captain Swinby, "and as you seem intel'gent sort of genelman, I don't mind telling you."

"Yes?" said Mr Muldevon with an eagerness he hardly tried to dissemble.

Captain Swinby looked at him fixedly.

"You seem extr'ordinarily in'rested in my friend Archie," he observed.

"I've taken a fancy to him like yourself, Swinby."

The Captain held out his hand and solemnly shook Mr Muldevon's.

"In that case, I hes'tate no longer. Mind you, I don't know 'xactly the name of the place, but"—he lowered his voice impressively—"it's where they keep the mad angels!"

"The what!" exclaimed Mr Muldevon.

"Mad angels. That's my friend Archie exactly—Mad Angel."

Mr Muldevon retired to ruminate on this information, and to judge from his expression it seemed as though he were not yet entirely relieved of anxiety.

Left again to his meditations, Captain Swinby gravely emptied his glass, inspected the bottle minutely (even holding it upside down over the carpet), and then rose with a sigh and took a couple of steps towards the door, to the vast interest of a group of waiters who stood watching his proceedings with technical eyes.

"I told you so!" said one of these experts, as the gentleman turned back again with a sorrowful air, "'E knows 'e can't do it!"

Dropping into his chair again, and burying his face in his hands, the distinguished explorer murmured—

"This is absolutely won'erful!"

It was a dance or two later that Archibald, glowing with triumph and moist with his exertions, burst like a ray of glory into the supper-room.

"A glass of fizz from the tap!" he cried; "my throat's dry as a judge with proposing."

And then his eyes fell on his friend.

"Bring a bottle to this table!" he commanded, and threw himself into the chair opposite the explorer.

"What's happened to you, Jack?" he asked; "I haven't bumped into you for the last six dances!"

His friend looked at him steadily and sadly.

"Archie, my dear, dear ol' friend," he replied, "the most won'erful and aston'shing

pher—phernom'non has happened. I am drunk."

"Good bird!" said Archibald. "It's a wonderful happy feeling, isn't it?"

The Captain shook his head mournfully.

"My weakness," he sighed; "my dear ol' weakness! It hasn't faded, Archie. It has returned abs'lutely full of beans."

"Well," said Archibald, "that's a jolly healthy sign, let me tell you."

"You are mos' encouraging—mos' encouraging, Archie," replied the explorer; "at the same time, I'm a man of the worl', and there are preju'ces against genelmen getting drunk. I have disgraced you, Archie!"

"Nonsense," cried Archibald; "nobody'll notice."

Captain Swinby shook his head still more mournfully.

"The contrast, Archie, the contras' between you so beastly sober, and me so bew—so bewlifully drunk, is too won'erfully striking, Archie."

"That's easily cured," said Archie, draining his glass and filling it again, "I'll get drunk too."

His old friend held out his hand with an ecstatic smile.

"Jus' what I was going to sugges'!" he exclaimed. "You have the insting of a sportsman and a genelman, Archie! And that being so, I see abs'lutely no reason why I shouldn't get a li'll bit drunker."

Throwing himself into his work with his usual ardour, Archibald was able to announce in about three minutes—

"I'm quite drunk enough now, old bird!"

"And I am distingly drunker," replied Captain Swinby.

"Then let's go home," suggested Archibald. "It's no good trying to dance on these revolving floors."

"Dance!" exclaimed the Captain, "I can't even walk on the beas'ly things."

"Waiter!" cried Archibald, and a sympathetic expert was instantly at his elbow. "Help this genelman to walk quite steadily and soberly into my car."

Captain Swinby reached the car after a progress through the mansion, which succeeded in eclipsing all the other sensations of the evening.

Not the least impressed of the spectators was Mr Muldevon, whose kindness in assisting their progress was rewarded by a very eloquent speech of thanks on the doorstep, finishing with this surprising disclosure—

"My dear, dear old friend," said Archibald (who made the speech unassisted, the Captain being by this time asleep in the car), "in conclusion let me explain myself. Your lovely daughter wants t'know who I am. Tell her, John—I don't know your Christian name so I must jus' call you John—tell her, John, with my love, I'm a partner in a baronetcy, so if she wants to get engaged to me—well, there you are! Go' bless you!"

Looking much less enlightened than one would expect after such a particularly frank statement, Mr Muldevon re-

turned thoughtfully to the ballroom, where he was heard to express the opinion very emphatically, and with unmistakable feeling, that he had never been so d——d in his life.

Meanwhile in the green-upholstered car Archibald with equal emotion was lamenting his incautious candour.

"Given myself away! Told old John all about my dreadful secret. No one will ask me to any more dances when they know I'm only that blighter Wyverne! A tragedy, old bird, jus' a horrid tragedy!"

Discovering at last that the old bird was still fast asleep, he spent the next few minutes in gently rousing him, and by the time he was awake they had drawn up before the portals of the Chic.

With the assistance of Jehu the Captain was extricated, and the two gentlemen were left on the pavement of Piccadilly to face the problem of an effective entrance. Under ordinary circumstances the steps were not numerous, steep, or unsteady, nor did the revolving door present at all an impossible obstacle; but Captain Swinby's circumstances were not ordinary. Even Archibald's were a little unusual; and to add to the drama, as it was only just after midnight and the streets not yet empty, a small crowd was already collecting.

Fortunately Archibald was always inspired by a crowd, and this time his inspiration took one of its loftiest flights.

"I say, old bird," he said confidentially so that the

crowd should not overhear, though as he happened inadvertently to shout his secret it was actually rewarded by a round of applause, "let's pretend we're polar bears and come in growling. That'll amuse 'em extraordinarily. They'll never dream for one single instant you're drunk—jus' trying to be funny. Come on!"

"Mos' encouraging—mos' encouraging, Archie!" agreed the Captain.

Accordingly on their hands and knees the two polar bears slowly ascended the steps, and with the assistance of many willing spectators the glass door began to revolve. When it had revolved exactly half-way round, the Grand Ducal party, which happened to be in the hall, were startled to catch a glimpse of what appeared to be a dark-coloured quadruped entangled in the door, though so vigorously did the assistants make it revolve that at the first attempt Archi-

bald was whirled round on to the steps again.

The Captain being a heavier weight had more luck, and made a very successful entrance, his growls being distinctly audible on the second floor. Archibald's second attempt resulted in an equally spectacular effect, and the picturesque flight of the Grand Ducal party as the two monsters roared their way to the lift left absolutely nothing to be desired.

"'Gratulations! Sim'ly ever and ever and ever and ever so many 'gratulations, old fellow!" said the Captain enthusiastically as the bears arose at last in the privacy of their room. (Archibald had considered it wiser the Captain should remain a quadruped in the lift.)

"Wasn't it a neat idea?" said Archibald, "and won't the old manager laugh to-morrow! I say, I strongly advise you to preten' you're a rat and sleep on the floor!"

Which he did.

CHAPTER XX.—THE FLIGHT.

"The manager would be obliged if I could make it convenient to see him, would he?" said Archibald. "Right-oh! I'll oblige him in a moment."

The servant retired, and Archibald finished his tea and lit a cigarette.

"What's all this about?" said the Antarctic Explorer, who was breakfasting rather daintily and extremely silently.

"Oh, the Baron and I are

great pals; we're always consulting each other. I tell you what, I'll suggest his giving a ball here—fancy dress! I'll bet you he does it, too; my ideas always come off!"

The fortunate youth entered the manager's room with his gayest air.

"Morning, Baron!" he cried. "Did you hear the polar bears last night?"

There was no answering smile on the manager's face.

"I saw two gentlemen enter this hotel in a condition they should not be in," he replied icily.

"Oh, you saw us, did you? I say, didn't you laugh!"

"No," said the manager, "I did not laugh."

"Good lord! You don't mean to say you thought we were real bears?"

"What I thought about your conduct, Mr Fitz-Wyverne, I need not express. I must trouble you to leave this hotel to-day."

The fortunate youth dropped into a chair.

"Baron," he said, "this is an absolute eye-opener! I always thought you were one of the best. Do you mean to tell me literally you didn't appreciate the humour of the situation?"

"No," replied the manager, "I did not appreciate it. Here is your bill."

"My dear chap, there's no hurry about that anyhow. I always pay monthly," said Archibald, as he waved away the bill with a princely gesture. "But what really worries me is the idea that a thorough sportsman like yourself——"

"You will pay to-day and you will leave to-day," interrupted the manager calmly but frostily, "and your friend also. Can you make it convenient to quit your rooms by twelve o'clock?"

"No," replied Archibald candidly, "I cannot make it convenient."

"By what o'clock then?"

"Look here, old bird," said Archibald in his pleasantest manner, "I'm extremely happy

where I am. What put this wild idea into your head?"

"My guests request me to remove you, and even if they had not done so, I should still request you to remove yourself."

Archibald became dignified.

"This is a most extraordinary way to talk to a gentleman who has shown his confidence in you by depositing £500 with you. Didn't that point of view occur to you?"

"Your deposit did occur to me," replied the manager. "In fact it has occurred to me frequently. It is one of the reasons why I ask you to leave."

As he spoke he unlocked his safe and placed the canvas bag on the table before Archibald.

"I do not collect pennies," he added.

"Pennies!" exclaimed Archibald. "I say, really this is going a little——"

"Would you like to feel them for yourself?" interrupted the manager coldly, at the same time pinching one of the coins through the canvas.

Archibald whistled.

"I hadn't thought of that!" he admitted. "Still, how do you know they aren't half-crowns?"

"I know they are not sovereigns, and let me tell you, Mr Fitz-Wyverne, such a deposit—is—very—suspicious!"

The slow and menacing way in which he pronounced these last three words impressed Archibald unfavourably.

"My opinion of you is rapidly falling, Baron," he said sadly, "and under these circumstances I really don't know

that I am justified in giving this tottering pub a lift any longer. But I tell you what I will do; I'll make you a thoroughly sporting proposition."

With his smile returned and a confident air he brandished the bag in the manager's face.

"I'll give you this bag in full and complete payment of my bill! Including the hire of the car, of course."

"Wait a bit, old bird!" he added hastily as he perceived unsympathetic symptoms—"just think it over. You don't know what's in the bag! They may be half-crowns; there may be sovereigns mixed up with 'em; it may be full of diamonds in the middle—too far in for you to feel, I mean. In fact, it's a thoroughly sporting event. Are you going to be a hero or a worm?"

"I am going to trouble you to pay this bill," said the manager with a glitter in his eye.

"A worm!" pronounced Archibald. "Well, this will damage the reputation of the Chic irretrievably—that's my one consolation! I presume you would rather be paid by cash than cheque?"

"Decidedly," agreed the manager.

"Have my car at the door in five minutes!" commanded Archibald magnificently; "I propose to get a cheque cashed and then pack and leave your hotel by 11.45. I decline to remain in it till 12 o'clock."

The manager bowed in silence, and with the canvas

bag under his arm Archibald strode haughtily out of his unworthy apartment.

He re-entered his private sitting-room with quite a different expression.

"We've got to hook it, Jack!" he chuckled.

"What's up?" exclaimed the Captain.

"That blighter didn't think polar bears funny, and he's had the extraordinary audacity to present me with his bill."

As he spoke he put the offending document into the fire.

"Was that receipted?" cried his friend.

"Not likely! I've only got a dozen or so thick 'uns left, and the Lord knows what that bill amounted to."

"What are you going to do?"

"Scoot. Come on; let's stick as much as we can in our pockets—enough for the night anyhow. They won't let us take our luggage till the bill's paid."

He seized his overcoat, took it into his bedroom and proceeded to stuff hair-brushes, razors, and pyjamas into the pockets.

"But I say!" gasped the explorer, following him. "Haven't you any money in the bank?"

"Thousands and thousands," said Archibald, "but the fact is my best girl went away with my cheque-book."

"But, you duffer, you can get another cheque-book at the bank!"

Archibald shook his head.

"My bank is a most ex-

traordinary institution. If I asked them for a cheque-book they'd pretend not to know me! It's their way of playing the polar bear game."

"But what's this?" exclaimed the Captain, noticing the canvas bag for the first time. "'£500'!"

"There's exactly one quid's worth of browns in that sack," said Archibald carelessly; "I mean to leave it as a tip for Jehu."

"Then you're not taking the car?"

Archibald winked.

"You'd better get your pockets packed, Jack — and wear a felt hat, etcetera, just in case we do a bit of motoring."

Captain Swinby looked at him in silence for a moment, and then shook his head.

"I've had some rum adventures in my life," said he, as he went to his own bedroom, "but this is easily the rummest."

Had he but known it, the really adventurous part of his life was only just beginning.

When he returned to the sitting-room with his pockets packed, he found Archibald finishing a note. He offered no explanation of this, but put it in his pocket, jumped up, and led the way to the lift.

"Look as like an insulted Emperor as you can!" he whispered.

With cold eyes and haughty mien, they crossed the hall and entered the green-upholstered car.

"To the Union Bank in Chancery Lane!" commanded Archibald in a loud distinct

voice. "And stop at the nearest telegraph office on the way!"

"I've just remembered I ought to send our new address to a blighter who may come in useful at a pinch," he explained. "It's a kind of precaution."

"What is our new address?" his friend inquired.

Again Archibald winked, and the explorer began to realise more and more what a safe and quiet refuge his bench in the Green Park had been.

Archibald dashed into the telegraph office and out again, and the car resumed its eastward progress. Presently they came to a motor accessory establishment, and, almost as though he had anticipated this contingency, he stopped the car and put his head out of the window.

"I wish you'd run in here, Jehu, and ask them if they've got that electric torch ready for me. See that it's the right kind one needs for motor work."

The stout, dark chauffeur disappeared into the shop, and the next instant Archibald had the door open.

"Hop out!" he cried.

In another moment he was at the wheel, with the bewildered Captain sitting beside him. And then off went the green-upholstered car; and the very first thing it did was to alter its direction from eastwards into southwards.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said the Captain. "Where the blazes are you going to?"

As Archibald was in the act

of saving an elderly gentleman's life by a margin of three-quarters of an inch, and at the same time extracting a remarkable testimonial from an excited bus-driver, he was excusably silent for a moment. Then, as the car shot at thirty miles an hour through a gap in the traffic, he cried with dancing eyes—

"I say, isn't this fun, Jack! You know I really do have the most extraordinary luck!"

Over the river they flew, and through mile after mile of southern suburbs. They only stopped once, and that was at a leather shop where Archie rushed in, purchased a couple of small suit-cases, and had the car started again inside three minutes. And then out into the green fields and woodlands of Surrey they hummed.

"My dear Archie," said Swinby, as they hooted their flying way through a peaceful village with a sublime disregard of the "10 M.P.H." sign-post, "I don't want to seem critical, and I quite realise that as regards a life of crime it would be mere presumption to offer you tips; but I should really like to know how long you hope to keep ahead of the police. In the course of the next hour or two they'll be looking out for this inconspicuous little vehicle at every garage within a couple of hundred miles of London."

"We aren't going to put up

at public garages," said Archibald loftily. "We're going to be country-housers all the way."

"And whose country seat are you heading for now?"

"Mountappleton's."

"The Marquis of Mountappleton?"

Archibald nodded.

"But how the devil——!"

"I've got an introduction in my pocket from my cousin Wyverne."

"Then Warrington-Browne's your cousin? You never mentioned it before!"

"Didn't I? Well, you see in some ways he's rather an ass, so I don't swagger about the relationship."

His fellow-adventurer looked at him for a moment apparently with increased respect, and then suddenly he exclaimed—

"But, I say, old chap, what about me? This introduction doesn't cover the distinguished Jack Swinby!"

"Oh, yes it does, old bird. It mentions you in very flattering terms."

"An introduction from Warrington-Browne mentions *me*!" gasped the explorer, and then he recalled a picture of Archie finishing a note in their sitting-room at the Chic.

His next glance at Archibald was still respectful, but it seemed to be a different kind of respect—the kind one instinctively feels for a man of great natural talents.

(*To be continued.*)

A GREEK ISLAND.

"There is a land amid the sable flood
Called Crete."

—COWPER'S *Odyssey*, xix. 215.

IN those very far-off days when the Titans ruled in heaven, Father Chronos made a disagreeable practice of swallowing his children alive as soon as they were born. So when the birth-time of Zeus drew near, his mother, Rhea, set out to find the loneliest spot in the world as a cradle for her son. Her quest brought her to Crete, and there in a cave on the wind-swept slopes of Mount Ida, safely hidden from the sight of his unnatural sire, the Father of Gods and Men was born. If you doubt the story, you have but to journey to the spot, where you will find the very cave I speak of. It is not many years ago that the ground inside was hacked up by the excavator's pick, and there came to light a mass of gold and silver ornaments, thrown there as offerings by Zeus' worshippers in an age less sceptical than our own.

Rhea's choice would hardly, perhaps, be justified to-day. Still, when one considers that Crete ranks as the fifth largest island in the Mediterranean, it is really remarkable how well her reputation for solitude has been maintained. How many Englishmen are there, I wonder, who have ever set foot in the island? There are the soldiers who were stationed in

Crete during the "international occupation" after '98 and the sailors who have served on the *stationnaires* in Suda Bay, but beyond these hardly a soul. Canea, the capital of the island, used perhaps to see half a dozen visitors a year. Candia, of course, with Knossos so close at hand, draws more strangers, and in times of peace it was usual for the sleepy old port to be roused from its slumbers once a year by a boisterous ship-load of sightseers; but even then the invasion lasted only a day, for it needs a tougher skin or keener archæological ardour than mere tourists possess to face the terrors of a Cretan *xenodocheion*.

It is to her history as a Turkish island that Crete owes this happy state of seclusion. Perpetual warfare between Greek and Turk, Christian and Moslem, repeated massacres and a chronic state of insurrection, combine to form an atmosphere which is little conducive to development along modern lines. The result was that when Greece annexed the island in the course of the last Balkan war, she acquired a province which was, and still is, innocent of the least trace of a railway, and devoid even of roads except for a few odd miles radiating

out from the three northern towns. A bicycle in Crete five years ago created much the same sensation as a motor-car in England in the nineties.

Yet there are few islands in the Mediterranean with more to offer to the explorer than Crete. Scenery as lovely as that of Cyprus, a medieval glamour rivalling that of Rhodes, and a store of ancient treasures as rich as those of Mycene and Troy, unite to make its charm. No one has travelled to Egypt or the Far East who does not know that grim coast-line and rugged chain of mountains stretching for well over a hundred miles which forms the southern aspect of the island. Few, too, but have known the tossing of those restless waters surrounding her coasts, which seem doomed to be racked by almost perpetual storm. The cliffs descend steep to the sea—a feature common to most of the islands of the *Ægean* and Eastern Mediterranean. Here and there a rocky promontory juts out, forming a barrier on which the waves beat remorselessly, shooting up into the air in columns of water and spray thirty or forty feet high. Tiny “smugglers’ coves,” often completely hidden from seaward, exist at intervals along this desolate coast. It is likely enough that the beach of some of these has been trodden by human feet for the first time for generations within the last few months, when some dastard *Unterseeboot*, returning from its errand of

murder, has slipped in there to hide. For it was off this coast, as the reader will certainly remember, that the *Persia* was sunk. The northern coast is scarcely less wild, though the only three ports of the island, Canea, Candia, and Rethymo, are situated along it, as if for a token of Crete’s allegiance to Europe. The ports are mere open roadsteads for all but the smallest craft. Suda Bay, on the other hand, only four miles from Canea, is one of the finest harbours of the Mediterranean. Four miles in length by one and a half in width, it is easily capable of holding all the navies of the world, yet it is so narrow at the entrance, where the little island of Suda almost blocks the passage, that there is only room for one vessel at a time to pass.

The mountains which stretch like a dorsal fin from end to end of the island rise in the west to an imposing height of over 8000 feet. In winter this part of the range is completely snow-clad, which has earned for it the name of λευκά ὄρη, the “White Mountains.” Their scenery is magnificent—but perhaps I can best convey an impression of it by an account of a trip made, in the company of a friend, from Canea across the “White Mountains” to the little fishing town of Sfakia, which lies on the southern coast nearly in a line with the capital.

We hired for our journey three little country-breds and a couple of guides. The latter were typical Cretans, tall,

finely built mountaineers, with dark Greek features and dressed in the peculiar costume of the country. The Cretan's national dress merits a word of description in passing. He wears on his head either a twisted kerchief or a sort of pirate's cap with a tassel hanging over one ear; his upper limbs are clad in a loose black shirt and his lower in a pair of black cotton breeches of a bagginess which is well-nigh inconceivable even to one who is used to the *shalwar* of the Levant. These breeches finish tight immediately below the knee and leave an inch or two of sunburnt leg showing above the top of a high yellow boot of untanned leather. The men stride along with the Highlander's easy gait, and as they go the slack of their preposterous breeches swings out behind them with all the jaunty air of a kilt.

With two such companions, then, and a pack-horse loaded with a few bare necessities, and a travelling dispensary from which my friend—a 'Times' correspondent and experienced traveller in Eastern lands—refused to be parted, we started on our journey. For the first few miles the path ran through a fertile plain separating the mountains from the sea. This is one of the few cultivated tracts of any size in the island, and is thickly planted with the two staple trees of the island, olives and oranges. The golden glitter of the one with the more sombre beauty of the other formed a delightful contrast for the eye whenever a

bit of rising ground gave us a view across the plain. After passing through the village of Munyés (of which more anon) the ascent began, and after a couple of hours' climbing we reached Therisso, a regular alpine village and famous in Cretan annals as the cradle of numerous revolutions. Here in Turkish days the Cretan mountaineers used to rally round their leaders and, like their cousins of the Swiss cantons, bid defiance to the forces of the foreign tyrant.

By evening, after nine or ten hours of march, we came to where the path debouched into a great cup-shaped space between the mountains, hemmed in by high peaks all around, and here we spent the night. This high-lying plain is sown with wheat and inhabited for a few months in the summer by shepherds whose flocks graze on the slopes of the mountains which surround it. Next morning we were greeted with a curiously biblical spectacle. The only water comes from wells in the middle of the plain, and thither all the flocks were brought to drink. The sheep, numbering thousands, stood in groups patiently waiting round the wells, while the shepherd of each flock took his turn to draw water and fill the troughs for his own sheep to drink. Alas for the sake of the illusion, Rachel's pitcher was replaced by the inevitable petroleum tin of the East! A series of threshing-floors lined the edge of the plain, some large, some small. In these

oxen were busy treading out the corn, either singly or yoked together in teams of three or four—once we even saw a “mixed” team consisting of an ox, a horse, a mule, and a donkey. The one-ox threshing-floor is a feature, I may add, which is particularly typical of Crete. Co-operation is quite unknown in the island, and independence is exalted almost to a vice, so that a man will rather have the tiniest threshing-floor of his own than combine with his neighbour for their mutual benefit. A Cretan once quoted to me a local proverb to illustrate this point. It ran thus—

“To every Cretan his own olive-tree
—be it only to hang himself from !”

The idyllic peace of this remote spot was rudely disturbed—though unknown to us at the time—on the very night of our stay. Before we left Canea, I had spoken of our proposed trip to the commandant of the Cretan *gendarmerie*, a splendid body of men originally trained by Italian officers. He tried, unsuccessfully, to dissuade us from going, hinting that there might be “a little trouble in the mountains.” It was not till some time later that we learnt the facts. A once famous brigand, the last of his band and an outlaw for many years past, had been tracked down and shot that night within a mile of our camp.

When we reached the heart of the “White Mountains” the wildness and grandeur of the

scenery became indescribable. Sheer precipices dotted with eagles’ eyries and unscaleable peaks, the home of the wild ibex, towered up from dark rock-strewn gorges. Here the path blended with the bed of a torrent, flowing in a shut-in gorge so narrow in places that while our horses floundered down the stream we could touch the wall of rock on either side. Following the stream, we came at last to its outlet on the sea. Here we emerged on to a desolate beach, in full sight of a small island a few miles out from land. This was none other than the “small island called Cauda,” under the lee of which St Paul’s ship was driven by the fierce north-east gale, coming down from the mountains, which caught them off this tempestuous coast. Its name to-day is Clauda, and it is deserted but for the shepherds who ferry their flocks over from the mainland in summer for the sake of its fine pastures.

A *gendarmerie* post had been built on this lonely stretch of beach to watch the coast against smugglers, and here we rested. The sergeant in command was a smart fellow and an excellent host, entertaining us with tales of outlaws and cattle-thieves, and how fugitives whom they were hunting in the mountains would sometimes slip down to the shore on a dark night, take boat and row the whole perilous way to Greece. He had been studying an English grammar when we arrived,

and eagerly asked for our assistance in teaching him the pronunciation of the strange words he found in it; the truth being that, like so many of his more ambitious fellow-islanders, he was tired of life at home and meant to emigrate to the States. Before we had been settled long the report spread that the great English *ιατρος* had arrived, and my companion found himself surrounded by a large clientele, sprung, as so often happens in Eastern countries, apparently from nowhere. Unfortunately, the knowledge of medicine and modern Greek possessed by the "*ιατρος*" were alike imperfect, which resulted in a slight dilemma. For, having dosed a sturdy *gendarme* for supposed rheumatism, he found he had mistaken his patient's complaint and that he was suffering in reality from a bout of malaria. Undismayed, he returned, however, to his medicine chest, produced another bottle, and administered a triple dose (to counteract, as he said, the effects of the first), and ordered his patient to bed. "But, *Kyrie*," remarked the unfortunate *gendarme*, "I have orders to accompany you on your next stage." Representations to his sergeant were without avail, and at midnight we started off again in the company of our much-doctored escort.

The moon was just on the wane, and as we threaded our way between the boulders which strewed the shore, we could still spare a glance for

the wonders of the moonlight on the waters, where a "Jacob's ladder" stretched out its silver rungs seemingly into infinity. By the time day dawned we were again inland, following an execrable path in and out of sheer out gullies, many of them full of a flaming mass of oleanders. Noon brought us to Sfakia—the Phoenix, very probably, of St Paul's journey—where we left our *gendarme* cheerful and smiling, and apparently not one jot the worse for his strange adventures in English therapeutics. The following day, being pressed for time, we headed back towards Canea, and crossing the mountains by another and lower pass, returned again to our starting-place.

Canea itself is a "fenced city." The Venetians, who possessed Crete in the Middle Ages, were solid builders, and the walls with which they surrounded the three small cities of their island dominion were of such massive proportions and excellent workmanship that the combined ravages of Turk and time have done but little to deface them. The lion of their patron apostle, which so invariably betrays Venetian handiwork, still stands watch above the gateways and on the bastions of the great harbour walls. Walking along the quayside at Canea you come upon a row of some half-dozen long narrow buildings which serve nowadays as the Customs warehouse, and are crowded with casks and bales. They

were originally the old Venetian galley-sheds, and one can form an interesting idea, by studying their shape, of the curious long proportions of war-vessels of that day—they were certainly *longæ naves* with a vengeance! In the days when the galley-sheds and the harbour walls were built, the Mediterranean, of course, teemed with pirates, and the fortified Cretan ports must have spelt safety to many a flying merchantman hard pressed by Barbarossa's corsairs.

The Venetians can hardly, I think, have failed to beautify with the gentler arts of peace the towns which they so zealously protected with the stern works of war. But if they did, sadly little has survived. The two specimens which do exist are both at Candia: the one is a handsome but terribly vandalised *loggia*, the other a street fountain of singularly graceful design, the basin being borne on the backs of four stone lions, while a beautiful foliated balustrade in six bays carved in bas-relief with figures of tritons and mermaids encloses the little pond into which the water overflows.

The solid fortifications of the island stood the Venetians in good stead against the forces of the Sultan. Crete was the last of the larger islands which fell prey to the Turk. Rhodes had fallen a century and a half before, in 1522, before the invincible armies of Suleyman the Magnificent. Forty years later its gallant defenders, the

knights of St John, who had emigrated to Malta, were again attacked, and stood a second siege as desperate as the first, though with happier results. Cyprus, like Crete an appanage of the Republic of St Mark, capitulated to Selim the Second before the century was over. Crete, however, kept the infidel at bay until 1669. For more than twenty years the Turks had battered away at the defences of Candia, then the capital of the island, and it was only when the Venetian garrison were reduced to the last extremities that the town finally gave in. Ottoman rule once established, the new province soon sank to the same level of stagnation as the rest of the empire, the Christian *rayahs* becoming little better than the serfs of the Turkish *aghas* who ruled in the island. The large semi-fortified country houses which the *aghas* built are still dotted over the fertile plain around Canea, usually on the summit of a low hill, where they stood for purposes of defence. In point of massiveness they rival the stonework of the Venetians, and they form one of the few redeeming features by which the Turks atoned, in some slight degree, for their expulsion of the art-loving Italians. One gift more the Moslem has added to the charm of Crete—those slender white minarets which rise so gracefully to-day above the stern brown walls of the city.

Last, but not least, we come to the Cretan antiquities. The

word "antiquities" has a dry sound about it; but I challenge any one with the least spark of imagination in his nature to visit Knossos and the Candia museum and not be thrilled to the core. It is all so unlike what one expects of remains which go back to the first dawn of European civilisation. They are "alive" as no other antiquities in the world that I know of. Ghizeh, Thebes, and Karnac fill one with amazement at the achievements of the old Egyptians, but all the time one has the feeling of an impassable gulf fixed between them and us. Greek temples at Athens and Greek statuary in museums are beautiful beyond compare, but their beauty is austere and remote. The civilisation of ancient Crete, about which we know as little as about the lost civilisation of Peru, seems a thing of yesterday. So living is the atmosphere in the palace of Minos, that it fills one with that curious feeling, which I have only known elsewhere at Pompeii, of prying into a neighbour's house when he is not at home.

We owe this in part at least to Sir Arthur Evans, who excavated the site. Having laid bare the foundations, he did not content himself with the use of a tape-measure as so many archaeologists would have done, but set to work to reconstruct the palace, not only on paper, but to some extent also in stone. He has built up the staircase out of its ruins, renewed the frescoes on the walls in their original colours and

designs, and named half the rooms in the palace. You enter nowadays by a passage with frescoed walls, and come first to the ambassadors' waiting-room, which is fitted with stone benches for their Excellencies to rest their weary limbs upon. Next door is the bathroom, where they washed off the stains of travel before their audience with the king. Beyond this again you enter the throne-room itself, in which the throne is still standing *in situ*. In other parts of the palace are the servants' quarters, the workshop, and the bull-ring (remember this is the home of the Minotaur). Down below are the cellars, once full of huge oil-jars five or six feet high, which held an important part, no doubt, of Minos' fabled wealth, and some of which have survived unbroken till this day. Most wonderful perhaps of all to the lay mind, a system of drains runs throughout the palace, which experts have pronounced to be the most scientific and up-to-date instalment ever seen previous to the nineteenth century.

The palace must have been a splendid sight in the days when Minos ruled the land. In size it would rank well, I suppose, among the royal palaces of Europe. Its height, in places at any rate, was four storeys, while the endless complexity of its rooms, corridors, and courtyards was such that a mere glance at the ground-plan to-day is quite enough to explain how the legend of that Labyrinth arose from whose intricate windings Theseus was

rescued by the thread of Ariadne. The palace stood on the slope of a hill leading down to a small river, a few miles inland from the sea, of which just a glimpse is visible. The outside walls were covered with shimmering alabaster, of which broken fragments still strew the surrounding ground. It must have nearly resembled the crystal palace of the princess in the fairy book.

From the site of the ruins a sun-baked, shadeless road leads back to Candia. Here, in a miniature museum, specially built for the purpose, you find stored all the movable objects which have been found at Knossos and the other palace-sites of the island. The flavour of modern-day life is as strong here as at Knossos itself. The pictures show scenes of bull-fights and boxing, or else crowds of elegant females as tight-laced and *décolletées* as any fair lady of the stage. There are black vases of soap-stone, of the most exquisite shape, ivory figurines of toredors, a carved bull's head with the most wonderful life-like eyes of painted crystal, ladies' jewellery, duelling swords, and even children's dolls' houses.

As for romance, one has only to turn to the library of clay tablets which were discovered in the palace cellars. They are covered with writing in an unknown character, over which learned heads have pored since the first day that they were brought to light. For all the ingenious theories which have been advanced,

however, they remain undecipherable still, and the tantalising secret of all they have to tell of life in those far-off ages remains an impenetrable secret. One of these tablets represents, by the way, the earliest known example of printing in the world. It is a circular disc on which the characters—which consist of neat little figures of men, birds, or beasts—were impressed with a stamp while the clay was still wet.

It is wonderful to think that the civilisation, which has filled the little museum at Candia with its priceless treasures, flourished a thousand years or more before the light first began to dawn on "classical" Greece. The manner of its collapse is perhaps the most dramatic feature in the whole story. So far as the archaeologists are able to tell, the entire fabric of this elaborate civilisation fell suddenly to dust about 1400 B.C., overwhelmed by some immense but unexplained disaster which left nothing but hopeless barbarism in its wake. All that is known for sure is that the palace was sacked and burnt, as proved by the charred ruins and the half-baked clay tablets found in the cellars.

I began this brief description of the island of Crete with a reference to that cave on Mount Ida which Greek mythology identified as the birthplace of Zeus. I cannot close without the mention of another famous birthplace of more recent connections. The little

village of Munyés, which I spoke of in describing our journey across the island, has a special title to fame in the present war. It can fairly claim indeed to have had no small share in shaping the struggle, by producing that most powerful factor in Balkan politics, M. Venezelos. The great Greek statesman, who has given such staunch and loyal support to the cause of the Allies, is a true-born Cretan. In his early days he led one of the miniature revolutions to which the island was so prone, and even set up a revolutionary government in Therisso—a curious reminiscence it must be for the great protagonist of constitutionalism in Greece to-day.

The village where M. Venezelos was born is a charm-

ing spot, fed by a sparkling stream from the mountains, surrounded by olive groves and full of pleasant orchards. But these are not the only features of Munyés; in and among the orchards stand the charred ruins of burnt homesteads, grim records of the days of Cretan “unrest.” Munyés presents indeed a very epitome of life in Crete in those stormy times when peace and bloodshed alternated as regularly as do tempest and sunshine to-day. They were tragic years for the island, yet one cannot help feeling a little regret as one watches “progress” at work, and foresees the approach of the day when the shriek of the first railway engine will sound the knell of the old romantic Crete.

G. E. H.

WOUNDED AND A PRISONER OF WAR.—II.

BY AN EXCHANGED OFFICER.

AT the 106 we had no restrictions as to visits; at all hours of the day numbers of people used to visit the wards, many came out of curiosity, and such visits were for me at any rate a penance, chiefly owing to the prevailing mania for shaking hands. At times whole families, dressed all in deep mourning, would drift into the room and stand awkwardly grouped at the foot of my bed. "Allons ma petite Françoise, va dire bonjour à ce brave soldat," and the whole tribe would come, one after the other, to perform the ceremony of the "shake-hand." After this function followed the inevitable question, "Where were you wounded?"

My method of dealing with this question always amused Mme. B.

"Où avez-vous été blessé?"

"A Caudry."

"Oui! mais à quel endroit avez-vous été blessé?"

"A l'entrée du village!"

"Oui, mais dans quelle parti avez-vous été blessé?"

"In the head, that is why I wear these bandages."

"Go, Françoise, say au revoir to the poor wounded soldier."

The function of le shake-hand having been re-enacted by each member of the family, they passed on to the next bed.

I had many friends whose welcome visits helped to break the monotony of hospital life.

Mlle. W. and Mlle. D. used sometimes to come and talk to their old "Numéro Sept," and tell me all the latest news. From them I first heard of poor Captain L., an English officer very seriously wounded, who occupied my old room in the Hôpital Civil. I wrote a short note to L., expressing my sympathy, and next morning, when Dr D. made his daily visit to the ward, I asked him to take it back with him.

There must be some special department of the German Staff solely occupied with the task of thinking out new things to make verboten. It is incredible, but true, that the Germans had forbidden any intercommunication between wounded and dying soldiers in the different hospitals, and so my correspondence with L. was carried on secretly through the kind offices of Madame B. Owing to her knowledge of German, Mme. B. was able to obtain a permit to visit the Hôpital Civil, and every day at 2 P.M., instead of taking her daily walk, she went to visit poor L., who was feeling rather lonely, and longed, as he said in one of his letters, to talk once more to a fellow-countryman.

It was after dinner on All Saints' day, November 1, that I made my first attempt to walk without any one's help. I got outside the ward and

along to a door which led into the courtyard. The night was clear and still, the wind cold and restless. I stood awhile on the wet gravel of the court, looking up once again at the clouds playing among the stars by the light of a rising moon.

"Vous n'êtes pas fou," said a voice from the doorway. "We looked for you everywhere; you will catch your death of cold out there in the dark."

"You cannot understand," I replied, "how good it feels to stand once more on the soil of the earth and look up into the heavens."

Two of the worst cases, Nos. 8 and 9, were taken away during the night to the Civil Hospital for a fruitless operation. In the afternoon, it being La Fête des Morts, Madame B. went to the military cemetery. Even the frozen soul of a German staff officer could not forbid the citizens of Cambrai to visit their dead.

In the military cemetery of Cambrai, visited on this day by crowds of mourners, the French and British soldiers are buried together in a common tomb, under a single wooden cross. There are several such tombs in the cemetery, and each to-day is covered with wreaths. A row of long black crosses, with name and regiment painted in white on each, marks the resting-place of the officers. The same order prevails in the German quarter of the churchyard.

In all the surrounding countryside at Caudry, at Le Cateau, in village churchyards,

in open fields by country roadsides, beside the plain wooden cross which marks the soldier's grave, some one to-day has laid a wreath and knelt in prayer.

At this time large numbers of troops were constantly passing through the city, coming from the direction of St Quentin and leaving in that of Valenciennes, from which point they proceeded to reinforce actual or impending attacks on Arras and Ypres. According to the universal opinion of Cambrai, the departure of the Germans from the city was to be expected at any moment.

The sound of the cannonade at Arras could be heard quite distinctly, and when the wind was favourable the boom of the big guns seemed nearer than ever. "They were coming nearer," said the citizens of Cambrai with mutual congratulations. The inevitable morning salutation now became, "Bonjour, bonjour; the guns sounded nearer last night and they will soon be here—listen! comme ça roule."

A gentle westerly wind carried to our ears the sound of the distant guns, like an echo of a distant thunder-storm.

One evening, late in November, a still clear night, when the cannonade could be heard more distinctly than usual, Captain V. and I stood out in the yard for a long time listening. To the long loud rumble of the German cannon we could hear, after an interval, a faint and more dis-

tant answer—an answer that spoke, as it were, in another tongue. It was the French 75!

It was obvious to those who did not yield to vain hopes that the German occupation of Cambrai was being organised on a permanent basis. Very few German soldiers remained billeted in the town. Numbers of them were constantly coming back on short leave from the front, and from them the story of the new trench war gradually became known to us all.

The Military Governor of Cambrai occupied the Town Hall, now known as the Kommandatur. The French “prefet” having fled the city on the approach of the enemy, a successor was appointed by the Kommander, and the administration of the city proceeded under German supervision and according to the usual German methods. Edicts were published at regular intervals declaring some new thing to be verboten, and always under penalty of death. Such things as bicycles and sewing-machines were requisitioned and forbidden to be retained under penalty of death. Any person at Cambrai or in the district found, after a certain date, in possession of pigeons of any kind would be condemned to death.

The old Cathedral had belonged for years to the pigeons, who, suspecting no danger, fell an easy prey, and for several days afforded fine game to the German sportsmen. Mlle. Marie, who passed the Cathedral

every morning on her way to the hospital, told me that there were still a few survivors who, having learnt the lesson of their comrades’ fate, circled high round the Cathedral tower or remained anxiously perched on some lofty gar-goye.

The “Cambrai” pigeons were presented to the Hôpital 106 by the Secretary of the Kommandatur, and thus did not meet with the final indignity of being eaten by the enemy.

A typical illustration of German morality is afforded by an edict which was published in Cambrai towards the end of November. All able-bodied Frenchmen were ordered to present themselves at the Kommandatur on a certain date, and were to be sent to Lille to dig trenches. Only a small number of men presented themselves on the appointed day, and were offered the job of digging trenches at five francs per day. Those who refused would be sent to Germany. Not more than twenty or thirty men accepted the proffered wage, and the remainder were sent to a German prison. Owing to the failure of the citizens to respond in sufficient numbers to this demand, the town of Cambrai was fined a large sum of money.

A declaration printed in French and German, of which I have seen a copy, was posted all over Cambrai under the heading, “Who is responsible for this Terrible War—ENGLAND.” Only the German

mind could have produced such an extraordinary document, in which England is accused, among other "crimes," of "having abandoned Belgium to her fate." Most of the French population of Cambrai were much entertained by the clumsy anti-British propaganda which emanated from the Kommandatur.

Another large poster appeared in all parts of the town stating that the British had been convicted of using "Dumdum bullets." A British rifle, with ammunition, was on show in a shop window in the marketplace, and the German soldier in charge explained to those who stopped to look that the hollow thumb-piece of the cut-off of the British rifle had been designed explicitly for the purpose of manufacturing dumdum bullets. By inserting the point of a bullet into the recess and giving the cartridge a rapid jerk, the pointed end broke, leaving a square ragged surface.

In their dealings with the civilian population of Cambrai the Germans showed how they utterly failed to understand the French mind.

Salle cinq vastly enjoyed the visit of a certain German officer who came ostensibly to "inspect," but in reality for purposes of "propaganda." The man's name is unknown to me. He was always referred to among ourselves as "the imbecile." He was so short of stature that the long Prussian cloak reached almost to the ground, and a more fatuous face I have seldom seen on

any man. He spoke French fluently but ungrammatically, and with a pronounced German accent. "Ponjour, Matame; here we are all French, is it not? Your so beautiful Paris I so much admire." The "imbecile," having gone round the ward, stood at the bottom of my bed facing the centre of the room, and entered into amiable conversation with Mme. B. and the other nurses.

He held forth at some length on the amenities of Cambrai, and expressed delight that the fortunes "of this terrible war" had been the occasion of his meeting and learning to love still more the French people, whom he had always held in such esteem.

"It is not the French who are the real enemies of Germany. If we had not been forced to do so by the treacherous English, never would we have invaded the soil of France. Ah, those English, what barbarians, what uncultured savages, such different types from those I see around me here!"

At this point Mme. B., catching my wink from behind the "imbecile's" back, nearly exploded with laughter, which she, however, managed to turn into a coughing fit, and the Salle cinq listened eagerly for more.

We heard the whole pathetic story of how Germany had been goaded into war. We were told that Paris now was safe. The German armies thirsted solely for English blood. When England had been crushed, then France and

Germany would fall into each other's arms and all would be forgiven and forgotten.

The "imbecile" departed, satisfied that he had sown good seed. Mme. B., with tears rolling down her cheeks, was too exhausted for laughter. The *Salle cinq* remained silent for a while, stunned by such a stupendous exhibition of stupidity.

Picard, the one-legged soldier, idiomatically expressed the thought of the *Salle*. "Eh bien, il n'a pas peur celui là," which remark might be translated: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

The Inspecting Officer, who came round every two or three days, was General Oberarzt Schmidt. In addition to this more or less regular visit, there was another doctor named Meyer, who was charged with making up lists of "transportables." Every one naturally wished to put off the evil hour of departure to Germany as long as possible, especially as hopes were still entertained by many that the French troops would drive the Germans out before Christmas. Meyer only paid one visit to the *Salle cinq*, on which occasion its inhabitants appeared all to be on the point of death!

The list of *Salle cinq* showed that there were ten French and one British. Meyer stopped at the foot of my bed and turned his cold cod-fish eyes at me. His finger reached for pencil and note-book. M. B. saved my name from going on his list by declaring that my paralysis was such that I could

neither move nor speak. The cod-fish eyes looked hard at me: "Können Sie Deutsch verstehen?" I gazed at him with dropped jaw and vacant eyes, shaking my head very slightly. There were no "transportables" that day from the *Salle cinq*.

Meyer was cordially detested by the whole hospital staff, by reason of the contemptuous insolence of his manner. His hatred of the English was fanatical. Mme. B. once asked him if there was any prospect of an exchange. "Of the French, yes," he replied; "of the English, never!"

General Oberarzt Schmidt, a very different type, was a tall, big-framed, and full-bodied man, large in the belly, bulging at the neck, with a pinky-red face and a large square head, bald on top, fringed with short-cut grey-blond hair. He spoke no English, and only a half-dozen words of French. It would be difficult to find an attractive feature in the face of General Oberarzt Schmidt. The large mouth which droops shapelessly to one side is decorated on the upper lip with a few clipped badly-grown blue-grey bristles. The eyes, small and shifting, are almost colourless. Whatever his true character may have been, to us at the 106 he was always courteous and well-behaved. He used to come to the *Salle cinq* every week, and often remained to talk to Mme. B., who, owing to her fluent knowledge of German, was able to obtain from Dr Schmidt a certain amount

of latitude regarding the question of the "transportables." It was thanks to Mme. B. that the two French captains, whose wounds were completely healed, were able to remain at 106 for several weeks after they were fit to travel.

At the Hôpital Civil, the German weekly inspection, when carried out by such men as "Grigou," was a merciless visitation, and for those whose names went on the list there was no reprieve. But at the 106 we suffered from no such unreasoning severity. Doctor Schmidt was often induced to postpone the departure of any soldier really unfit for the journey.

"Tetanus' made the night hideous with groaning and moaning, so that no one could get any sleep." This entry in my diary refers to a young Breton soldier who was isolated in a room opposite the Salle cinq. The word "room" gives a wholly wrong impression of the place where this unfortunate man had to be put. In one corner stood an old and useless bath, in another two broken bedsteads; the rough flooring was littered with rubbish. The walls had never been papered, the plaster still hung in patches, cracked and yellow with damp. A wooden partition half-way up to the ceiling divided the place off from the corridor, and thus the moans of the dying man could be heard distinctly in our room. There was no other accommodation in the hospital wherein a patient, such as this one,

could be isolated. Tetanus was very common at Cambrai. We had eight cases at the Hôpital Civil, six of which died. Very little treatment could be given, as there was no anti-tetanus serum to be had. The horror of tetanus is unique, for there is no disease so insidious, so sudden in its effects, and so terrible in its end.

For three days the man lived in a semi-unconscious condition. The first evening we could hear him moaning, a low, steady, pitiful moan. About the middle of the night there was a sudden silence, then a crash, and a sound of struggling. M. Vampouille, who was on duty that night in our ward, rushed across the corridor and, by the light of a match, bent over the man's bed. It was empty! From the middle of the room came again the low moaning sound; the unfortunate man had struggled out of bed in a fit. The stitches of his leg, which was amputated above the knee, had burst, and he lay in a pool of blood. Mr Vampouille's further description of the scene is too awful to dwell upon. From that evening of November 4 until the morning of November 7, almost without a stop day and night, there came from that room the most mournful lamentation, loud, deep, and sonorous, though it came through teeth clenched in the rigor of the dreadful disease. Through locked jaws and motionless lips came the sound that expressed the sole thought of his mind. There is

no phrase or turn of writing that can express the pitiful, appealing, struggling effort of the dying soldier to articulate this dying call for his mother. For three days and three nights, first strong and loud, then weaker and weaker, his constant call was "Maman, Maman," expressed in this awful moaning. On the third day I went in to see him. A nurse was attempting to force some warm milk between his teeth, but with no success. It was better to let him die in peace. He did not look more than nineteen. Sweat ran in trickles down the pale face wrinkled in agony. His thick black hair fell low down over clammy forehead and temple. The blue-grey eyes stared fixed and sightless. The moaning was now low and weak, but one could hear the call was still for "Maman, Maman." Early next morning I woke while it was still dark, sat up in bed and listened. From somewhere in the hospital there came a swishing, gurgling sound very like the whistling noise of a turbine engine. Still half asleep, I sat wondering what kind of engine it could be. When day dawned the swishing, whistling noise had ceased, and the suffering of the poor Breton boy was over. Mme. B. was very late in coming to the ward that morning. She told me that the last few minutes before the end were quite peaceful. M. le Vicaire-Gen. administered the Last Sacraments, and Captain V. spoke in the dying man's ear the only earthly consol-

tion that remained: "Mon garçon, tu meurs pour la France."

In many respects life in the Salle cinq now began to be much easier. As a result of my insistent propaganda in favour of fresh air, I obtained some small concessions, and succeeded in obtaining a number of adherents to the policy of an open window. The worst cases in the ward had been taken away; those that were left gradually got better, and even No. 6 in the corner began to improve. In the afternoon I played bridge with the French captain and some other friends who used to pay me regular visits, or discussed the gossip and news of the town with Vampouille. First of all there was that most excellent M. Herbin, a big, strong, hearty man, certainly well past fifty, with honest brown eyes that looked you straight in the face, showing that his heart was in the right place, as the saying is. My friend was a man of few words. "Allons, mon pauvre vieux, ça va bien hein! la santé?" "Très bien, mon cher ami." "Tant mieux. Tant mieux." And the Boches? We used to talk of them.

Cambrai was like a city stricken by the plague. Most of the shops had their shutters up. No one went abroad for pleasure, one stayed at home these days; and the "place publique," with its German military band which played every day at 4 o'clock, the café where one used to take the evening "Pernod"—such

places were now the haunt of the Boche.

M. Herbin owned a draper's shop, his speciality was ready-made clothes, and his business was practically at an end. At the time there was very little cash in circulation at Cambrai. Notes for 1, 2, and 5 francs were issued by the Town and the Chamber of Commerce, with an inscription stating that "this note will be cashed by the Chamber of Commerce 100 days after the signature of peace." The German usually paid for everything with "bons de requisition." These vouchers were guaranteed by the German Government only when stamped by the "Kommandatur."

During the first few weeks of the German occupation officers and men made a practice of entering shops, taking whatever suited their fancy, and then, by way of payment, offering the helpless tradesman a scrap of paper covered with unintelligible hieroglyphics. These scraps of paper were absolutely worthless. It was the German idea of humour thus to rob the unfortunate tradesman by presenting him in return for his merchandise with a written statement certifying "the bearer of this is a silly fool." A still more Germanic humour found its expression in coarse vulgar filth. When the bewildered shopkeepers brought their promises to pay to the Kommandatur for verification they were greeted with jeering laughter. German humour finds its happiest element in all that con-

cerns the lowest functions of the body, and doubtless the story of such vulgar jests at the expense of a helpless enemy were repeated with much gusto by the elegant fraus of the Fatherland.

Among other visitors whom I was always glad to see were M. et Mme. Ray. The latter used to come to the Salle twice a week during the afternoons, so that Mme. B. could get off duty. Mme. Ray was an incorrigible optimist. Every movement of German troops, whether entering or leaving Cambrai, she always referred to as a retirement. Whenever the wind changed and the sound of guns was more distinctly heard—the French were advancing. On Christmas day, she used to tell me, we will be "in France." I rather think that these opinions were expressed for the purpose of cheering up the Salle cinq, for Mme. Ray was too sensible a woman in other matters to be in reality so lacking in judgment in this particular case.

M. Vampouille came every afternoon, except when detained by his business, which at this time consisted chiefly in killing pigs to make sausages for the German soldiers—sausages which they had to pay for in hard cash, as V. always refused to deal in vouchers. My kind friend never came to see me without a "surprise," a little parcel which he brought in his pocket—a slice of "pâté," or ham, or "saucisson à l'aile," and many other tit-bits.

During these days there was a great scarcity of decent tobacco, although there was plenty of what was called "Belgian tobacco." It is difficult to suggest what this stuff might have been. It was sold in large square parcels, covered with blue paper, labelled "Tabac Belge," and cost one franc for a very large-sized packet. Once a week a woman came into the hospital yard bearing on her back a large basketful of tobacco, cigars, and matches with which she had travelled on foot from Belgium. The cigars only cost three sous for two. I never made any attempt to smoke them, but once out of curiosity I dissected one and made a strange discovery. The outside leaf was cabbage, stained dark-brown; it came off quite easily and disclosed a second and a third cabbage leaf of a light yellow colour. Inside these three layers of cabbage leaf was a hard rolled cylinder which, as it would not unroll, I cut into two pieces with a sharp knife. The cylinder was filled with small shavings and dust, whether from fag-ends of cigarettes or merely from street sweepings, it was impossible to tell. I have seen a soldier achieve the wonderful feat of smoking one of these cigars to its hot and bitter end. This was "Picard," the one-legged man of *Salle cinq*—Picard, who smoked all day and most of the night, quite indifferent as to the substance he put into his clay pipe as long as it would produce smoke.

M. Vampouille succeeded

where many other friends had failed. He found a supply of "English Tobacco." A patriotic "*marchande de tabac*" had buried the most valuable part of her stock in a back garden rather than let the Boches have the advantage. There were three four-ounce tins of Craven Mixture and three boxes of cigars "Bock." It was indeed a luxury to smoke real tobacco and real cigars.

"First flakes of snow. Result, windows shut tight day and night. Next day a stove was put into the middle of the room, which is now so stuffy that one can hardly breathe even with the windows open. To-day, November 16, I began to walk with two sticks."

My good friends, the two French officers, had at last to go, and it was a very sad day for us all. The list of transportables, a short one, included five or six French soldiers. They made a very sad picture as they limped painfully out into the yard and were helped up to a seat in the ambulance, each one carrying on his back a large bundle containing socks, a shirt, and as much meat and bread as could be taken by a wounded man on such a journey. M. B. went down to the station with the two captains. We were glad to hear that they were given comfortable berths in a hospital train, and thus were able to make the long three days' journey in comparative comfort—a good fortune which in those days was invariably de-

nied to British officers, even when very severely wounded.

On 25th November I got away from the ward and the fruitless struggle for fresh air by taking Captain V.'s bed in the tiny little room shared with le Médecin Chef. The room was long and narrow—perhaps 20 feet by 5,—with only just room for two beds, the washing-stand, and a small table where the doctor and I used to sit and play piquet—a game at which I had neither skill nor luck, for when our games came to an end the doctor had scored over 5000 points to the good! A welcome interruption to our card-playing was the visit of Mme. de R., a charming Polish lady who was nurse at the Hôpital Notre Dame, where she for many months nursed two British officers—Major J. and Lieut. F., both very seriously wounded. She saved Lieut. F.'s life by careful nursing, when the doctors had given up hope, and she did everything that could be done to make easier the slow decline of Major J., who, mortally wounded in the spine, lived till the first day of 1915. Mme. de R. came two or three times a week with a delicious "Chausson au pommes," and sometimes a bottle of Vin d'Oporto to liven up the grey, dull winter afternoons. One day she brought me a copy of 'The Times' for November 19th, the first English newspaper I had seen since August 12th.

In a much-thumbed copy of the 'Figaro,' dated October

25th—a copy which, it was said, had been dropped from an aeroplane, and which we secretly circulated from ward to ward—we read the story of Ypres, vague reports of which we had heard from German soldiers, who were told by their chiefs, and firmly believed, that the objective now before them was first Calais and then London. We heard that, once Calais had fallen—and who could doubt that it would fall?—the famous big guns that had done such deeds at Liège and Antwerp would batter down the defences of Dover and sweep a passage across the Channel for the German troopships. It was Bismarck, I think, who, looking over London from the top of St Paul's, exclaimed regretfully, "Was für Plünder!" On this "Plünder" the mind of the German was now fixed; and soldiers billeted in the town talked grandly of the punishment to be inflicted on England for having treacherously hatched a cowardly plot for the destruction of the German Empire.

The bulletin of war news, posted up each morning outside the Kommandatur, boasted each day of the capture of countless Russian and French prisoners. One day in November the Cathedral bells were rung to celebrate the victory of German arms in the East. All such official displays of cheerfulness could not hide from our observant notice that all was not well with the German armies. The glorious victories always took

place at the other end of Europe.

But nothing was published officially about the military situation on the Western front. German soldiers back from the trenches of Arras spoke bitterly of their failure to capture the French positions. Rumour said that the German casualties between Arras and Ypres amounted to over 100,000 killed. Arras was known to us as "*Le Tombeau des Allemands.*" Reports from Valenciennes told of crowded hospitals, train-loads of wounded, and train-loads of dead. Somewhere behind the line of battle, not very far from Cambrai, there are large brick-fields. Here it was that a crematorium was built. A tale was told of trains that passed in the night, of open trucks in which men, limp and with nodding heads, stood upright, packed in close array. By the light of some dim country station lamp the corpses in their blue-grey uniforms had been seen and recognised, though hidden by blood and earth, fresh from the field on which they had fallen. Even for the Boches this was too horrible an end, to travel in such manner to the grave, strung together like bundles of asparagus.

At times it would seem as if Martin Luther was right when he wrote in 1527 that the Germans are "a heathenish, nay utterly bestial, nation." But I do not hold with the judgment of this first apostle of frightfulness. The German nation consists of the

"High Command," with its hordes of obedient slave-drivers, and the rest of the nation, which in the inner chambers of the Higher Command is referred to as "the mob—die Menge." The "High Command" is certainly "heathenish," and may be looked upon as "utterly bestial," in view of the fact that they have replaced the elementary principles of honour by some sort of jungle law of their own making.

But there are still symptoms of humanity left in the "mob," something of human sympathy and of the brotherhood of man, which even at Cambrai made itself felt on rare occasions. Such an occasion was a visit to the *Salle cinq* of Herr Arntz. It was at the time when I was confined to bed, as much by the fear of Germany as by the paralysis, and on one of the darkest days of November. Mme. B. sat by my bedside, as she often used to do of an afternoon when the day's work was over, and spoke of a German who had called at the hospital a few days before, asking for her by name. He had stood out in the corridor waiting for her to come, bare-headed, closely cropped, in the uniform of a private soldier, and not until he spoke did she recognise a friend. They had not met for three years, and the place of their parting—the Black Forest in the spring-time. Herr Arntz, then a young student in chemistry on his holiday tour, had now passed his degree as Doctor der Chemie. In spite of weak eyesight and the wearing of

blue spectacles, he had been called up shortly after the outbreak of war, and was doing "railway duty" at Cambrai. So much and more had Mme. B. told me of her friend on that afternoon when he came again to see her.

It was cold, dark, and inhospitable in the corridor, and she brought him into the Salle cinq, where the gas lamps, which had just been lit, gave the room a touch of homely comfort. Perhaps it was the Numéro 6 who had called for morphia, or some other wounded man who required attention, so that Mme. B. left her friend sitting alone not very far from my bedside. I cherish no friendly feeling towards any "Boche," yet there was something about this one which commanded my attention. This was not the manner of our usual German visitors,—to sit there quietly and as if ashamed.

I started conversation with a hybrid sentence in French and German, which encouraged Herr Arntz to draw up his chair closer to my bed. There was nothing remarkable in the subject of our conversation. His attitude towards the war was that of a fatalist towards an earthquake; he showed a real sympathy for my state of health and the effect of my wound, choosing strange and almost unintelligible phrases in his efforts to speak the French tongue.

"Ah, mais 'le cerf' il n'est pas touché," then you will get well. That was good. And to me when I would speak of der Krieg, "let us forget it for

a moment." How could this quiet gentleman and I, lying sick, be at war? Was it indeed wrong, as many said at the 106, thus to converse with a Boche? Should I have refused my hand at parting? My friend, so I must call him for his kindness, lies in an honourable grave somewhere along the long battle line. A year later, promoted from guarding railway stations, blue spectacles and all, he "fell at the head of his company." One of the mob—Die Menge.

St Andrew's Day.—Captain L. is very much worse. Mme. B. goes to see him every day at 2 P.M., carrying a note from me and a "custard pudding" made by Mme. Tondeur. There was never a more motherly soul than Mme. Tondeur. And there never was a cook so excellent and yet so good-tempered, so pestered with visitors in the kitchen, yet always smiling and with a kind word for each one. Wounded men able to hobble out of the Salle cinq, or down from the other wards upstairs, loved to sit in a corner of her kitchen and peel potatoes or wash dishes and listen to the day's gossip. What with nurses and orderlies, stray visitors from the town, soldiers on crutches, all congregating in the kitchen, which might have been the H.Q. of the hospital, it was indeed a wonder that Mme. Tondeur could produce such an excellent dinner.

When M. Vampouille, of his own idea and specially to please me, cured a piece of

bacon à l'anglaise, Mme. Tondeur and I put our heads together over the cooking of "bacon and eggs." The simple barbarity of English cooking is always puzzling to French people. My dish, which started on the range as bacon and eggs, arrived on the table as an omelette au jambon.

What a sordid thing is a boiled potato in comparison with "des pommes frites!" We had fried potatoes one day a week, on which occasion all available hands were turned on to the work of peeling and slicing, no unskilled labour, when wastage is not to be endured. For every ward there was a large dish piled high, golden, crisp, and scalding hot and appetising—good to take with one's fingers like fine pastry, very different from the soppy, flaccid, colourless British imitation.

Every morning Mme. Tondeur prepared the "custard pudding" in a small dish, which was then wrapped up in a napkin ready to be carried by Mme. B. to our poor friend at the Hôpital Civil. "Ah, mon Lieutenant," she used to say, "what a joy it is to do something to help, even if so little. I also have a son in the trenches, and I pray le bon Dieu to send him back to me, even with a leg or an arm less I would not complain." "Si seulement je le savais comme vous!"

Here in England, far from the presence of war, it is impossible to realise the suffering of these unfortunate people in the North of France who have

never been allowed to get news from the trenches, who will not know the death of husband or son for months and years after. No correspondence is allowed even with neutral countries. Though the land under German occupation is a place of misery and desolation, it has one redeeming feature—there are no pseudo-conscientious objectors. German invasion and occupation of Britain would not be too high a price to pay for the extirpation of this national dry-rot.

One who has lived long months among these despairing people writes to say how hard it is for those outside the German zone to realise the misery of invasion. "Old men and little children work in the fields with neither horses nor oxen nor ploughs. In many places German soldiers plough and sow, desecrating the soil of France. . . . And when in France I hear it said that the war is without end, that the strain is too great, I think of those who live in the invaded districts, those who are exiled from France under the enemy yoke and yet do not despair, but wait with patient confidence for the hour of deliverance; perhaps they have some right to say the strain is hard to bear."

I do not envy the man, be he ploughman, starved tradesman, or merely possessed of a sickly conscience, who can apply for leave to stay at home while "old men and little children" till the fields of Northern France "without horses, oxen, or ploughs,"

under the hard rule of the Hun.

We were a sad party on that St Andrew's Day at the Hôpital 106. Mme. B. came in the afternoon rather later than usual to the little room, where the old Colonel and I sat playing piquet, bringing sad news from the Civil Hospital. Poor Captain L. was not expected to live more than a few hours.

We sat silently while the twilight melted into darkness. When a friend is dying those that watch and busy themselves with small services can find therein some small consolation. But we, weighed down in mind, powerless to influence in any degree the inevitable order of fate, found the pattern of the universe a hard reading.

To die is unimportant and common to all, the only important thing is the manner of our leaving. Captain L., my friend whom I have never seen, showed how the spirit of a man can rise above the saddest catastrophe of war and throw a gleam of light on the apparently hopeless and senseless maze of human misery.

Mme. B. used to come every afternoon straight back to my room after her visit to the Hôpital Civil, and her report to me never varied. "He never speaks of himself, but asks insistently for news of you." His eyes lit up on hearing that I could walk with crutches. "Do tell him to be careful and not try too much;"

and to-day, and on this sad St. Andrew's Day, his last words to Mme. B. showed the full measure of unselfish thoughtfulness: "Do not let him worry, do not let him know how weak I am."

It was quite dark when M. Vampouille came in. He would not suffer the darkness even after hearing the sad story, but lit the gas and kept a cheery manner. "It is something to know," said he, "that there are '*de si braves gens de par ce monde.*'"

St Andrew's Feast was not forgotten that evening. Monsieur Vampouille had brought me a scarce and much-valued delicacy which was prepared with special care by Mme. Tondeur and served up at dinner as a savoury. There was no escape from the six large healthy snails sitting in their shells enthroned on pieces of toast soaked in oil and vinegar mixed with chopped onions and garlic.

From Mme. B. there was a flower-pot with some early primroses and a note, "To the Scotch Lieutenant on St Andrew's Feast Day."

These gracious incidents, as R. L. Stevenson remarked, are distinctive of the French people, and "make the ordinary moments of life ornamental."

Also I had almost conquered my insular prejudice against the eating of snails, which are really quite succulent when served with such a sauce.

(To be concluded.)

AT CTESIPHON.

It was the evening of Sunday, the 21st of November, and the next day, as we all knew, would decide who were to be the future masters of Baghdad. There were few who did not realise how great were the issues, and there was that feeling of tension in the air which is only natural when there is the prospect of a big fight on the morrow.

That evening there was a particularly red sunset, and for the first time we saw the Arch of Ctesiphon standing up against the glow. It was about seven miles away, and behind some of the positions which we knew to be occupied by the Turks. The whole country was lit up. What portent would the Romans have made of such a blood-red sky before a battle!

Then darkness fell with the swiftness of the East, and the great Arch was blotted out.

However, we had other work before us than to stand admiring the sunset; of this we were reminded by the summons to the traditional pow-wow, presided over by the C.O. Here the scheme of attack for the next day was outlined to us. Our column was to march to a certain spot about seven miles away. There we would find a large dry water-channel, almost the only form of natural cover in those surroundings. At daybreak we were to conceal ourselves in this ditch,

and, unseen by the Turks, to await the order to reinforce the — Brigade. This unit was booked to attack a Turkish redoubt which bore on our maps the significant title of V.P., Vital Point.

At about 8 P.M. we fell in for our night march across the desert to the dry water-channel. A November night in Mesopotamia is a chilly business, and khaki drill, however comfortable it may be under the rays of the mid-day sun, is a poor protection against cold. We took neither greatcoats nor blankets with us. Everything had to give way to the exigencies of the march and of the coming fight.

We started in three long columns about 300 yards apart. It was a cloudless night and a bright moon lighted us on our way. We marched, of course, in silence—a silence that was only broken by the squeaking of cart or gun wheels and the occasional clink of a tin mug or a bayonet.

At one o'clock we were halted and told that there would be a rest of two hours. We all lay down and tried to sleep, but tired as we were, very few of us succeeded. The wakeful majority were reduced to watching with envy the peaceful slumbers of the lucky few. It was not every one who could sleep through the cold of such a November night, un-

troubled by it or by thoughts of the next day.

So we waited in the moonlight, the chill biting into us through our thin drill, the silence broken by the rather incongruous sound of snoring. At three o'clock we started off again, and by four A.M. had reached our destination. It was still dark when we arrived, and I climbed on to the top of the canal bank (about twenty feet high) to have a look at the country round.

In the direction of the Turkish lines I could see six or seven big bonfires burning; what they were for I never heard.

The bank of the water-channel, while providing excellent cover from view, would not have protected us properly from shell fire, so we started to dig ourselves in. By daybreak we were safely entrenched and could hear a good deal of gun and rifle fire going on to the south of us. We were compelled, however, to content ourselves with hearing, since to have looked over the edge of our bank would probably have given away our position to the Turks.

We sat in the trenches and had "breakfast." This consisted of two or three biscuits and a tiny tin of potted-meat from our haversacks; the whole was washed down with a little water out of our bottles, though it went against the grain to tap what might be our entire supply for the next two days. After "breakfast" we continued to wait in our trenches. It was

a trying time, listening to a battle which we could not see, but in which we expected momentarily to take part. The monotony was broken by such little interludes as the discomfiture of Corporal K., who was next to me, and down whose neck a shower of mould was suddenly shot. The cause was not enemy's shrapnel, but the eagerness of a Sepoy orderly to keep off the skyline while leaping across the top of the trench. No one was sorry to get a good laugh.

At last, at nine o'clock, the order came to come out of our water-channel and form up.

From the top of the bank we had a wonderful view of the whole position. To the south-west, and now no more than four miles away, was the Arch of Ctesiphon. Around it, the whole plain, as far as the eye could see, was dotted with troops in various formations. To the north we could observe squadrons of Turkish cavalry riding about.

Some Gurkhas marched by us on their way into action, and it was cheering to see their expansive smiles as they tried to repeat the "Hullo, Johnnie!" with which our men greeted them.

We moved off in artillery formation, but after about a quarter of an hour a few bullets began to flick up the dust around us. So we extended in long line, and in a few minutes the ball opened with the unwelcome attentions of some Turkish shrapnel. The enemy's guns, however, were directed against the firing line

in front of us, and only a few unlucky men in our lot were hit. That our friends ahead had not been so fortunate was plain from the number of still forms lying about, showing the tracks of the —— Brigade.

Our objective, V.P., was now distinctly visible, a sandy mound about thirty feet high, surrounded by a maze of wire entanglements. As we advanced to within about six hundred yards of the trenches, it became clear that the firing line had reached its final fire position. A concentrated gun fire was turned on to the mound, and a rain of shells fell on it, churning up the sand and giving it the appearance of a boiling cauldron. There was a rush and a roar of cheering, and the —— Brigade bundled the Turks out of their trenches.

Our direction was then changed half right, leaving V.P. upon our left, and we continued to advance until halted to wait for the troops on our flanks to come up level with us. At this point we saw ahead of us nearly 2000 Turks in one mass, retreating to their second-line trenches some two miles in rear. They were a long way off, so far, in fact, that we had to use our glasses to see whether they were our own men or the enemy. Having made sure, we opened fire and let off a good many rounds at them. I noted how well they covered their retreat, leaving a swarm of snipers hidden on the ground they had evacuated. These kept up a hot fire at us until we got within six hundred yards of

them. Then they got up and bolted, providing us with some excellent practice at the "running man." It is disappointing to confess that as far as I could see no hits were made.

After the departure of the snipers our objective was again changed. About a mile and a half in front, with the aid of field-glasses, we could see eight Turkish guns, and to these the C.O. now directed our advance. No one was sorry to get the signal, for it had been far from pleasant lying down on the perfectly flat and bare desert, exposed to continual rifle fire. Moreover, as in most uncomfortable experiences, the waiting was more trying to the nerves than the advance itself, a truth which no one who has stood outside the study of a housemaster will dispute.

This time we advanced by short rushes. When we had got half-way to the guns we spotted a trench full of Turks between them and us. So we fixed our bayonets, and on arriving within 200 yards got the signal to charge. Luckily they had not put any wire out, and after a breathless run I found myself standing on the parapet. Inside the trench were a fair number of Turks, who indicated to us that they did not "want to play any more" by holding their rifles at the "stand easy." There were also a number of dead and wounded lying in the bottom of the trench. We deprived our unwounded prisoners of their rifles, and by signs got them out of the trench, which they showed an

unaccountable reluctance to leave. To post a guard over them was the work of a couple of minutes, and then we pushed on towards the guns, which by this time had been abandoned by the enemy. No sooner had we reached them than the Turks began to plaster the place with shrapnel from other guns farther back. So unhealthy did the position become that we pushed on beyond our captures in order to upset the Turkish ranging. Our advance, however, threw our left flank "into the air," and there was nothing for it but to halt. We lay down, of course, and opened fire on some Turks whom we could see running about in a desultory way to our front. In about a quarter of an hour we were greatly surprised to see them coming towards us over a slight rise some eight hundred yards away. Evidently this was the counter-attack. A tremendous fire duel opened on both sides, and must have lasted an hour and a half. Our rifles got so heated that the grease began to bubble out of the woodwork and the sights became too hot to touch. In spite of our efforts the enemy continued to advance. They brought up two machine-guns, and concentrated their attention on our exposed left flank, so that we had to pivot our line round half left to meet them.

Things were getting serious, as our ammunition was running short. All our mules had been killed by shrapnel fire, and all fresh supplies had to be brought up to us on men's shoulders, no

light job when the distance is considered. Moreover, our exposed left flank was in continual danger, and it looked very much as if we would be cut off. It was a bitter moment when we were ordered to retire and to leave the guns we had captured; left, however, they had to be, as we had no means of getting them away. Nor were we able to do much in the way of putting them out of action, as the Turks had removed the breeches before our arrival.

When we withdrew, I noticed the man next to me, a bomber who had been carrying his rifle all day with a grenade fixed in it, waiting for a good target at close quarters. As I looked at him there was a click, and a bullet took the stock clean off his rifle. We could not help being amused at the misadventure; he was so very surprised, and rather annoyed at having to go through the business of fixing his precious grenade on to another rifle.

Having got back a bit we halted, formed a fresh line, and began again to advance. While taking part in a rush, I suddenly felt a blow on my right foot, and on looking down saw a bullet firmly wedged between the sole and upper of my boot. It did not hurt my foot, nor did it drop out until nearly half an hour afterwards.

By this time we were approaching the Turkish guns once more. Again, however, the enemy brought up a heavy counter-attack against our

flank, and we had no alternative but to go back 500 yards or so and re-form for a fresh advance. The time was about 3.30 P.M., and this was our third attempt to make good this part of the line. It was also, so far as I was concerned, the last.

We were lying down at the end of a rush when I felt a sudden shock like an explosion which stunned me for a moment. On recovering I found that my right arm had collapsed across my face and had developed a new joint rather higher than the elbow. Obviously it was broken, though at the time I did not know where or how. I distinctly heard the bullet go into the stock of my rifle, after finishing with my arm.

This ended my share in the fight; I began to feel very faint, and the only thing to be done was to go back while I was still able to walk. I was helped by some one whom I found a little later to be Private X., my batman. He had looked after me when I was recovering from another wound I had got earlier in the year at Kut; this time again he had been close to me during the fighting. As soon as we were out of the zone of fire he dressed my arm in a skilful way, though I cannot say I enjoyed the job. When my sleeve was cut off we found that my arm was broken midway between elbow and shoulder. My batman made a sling for me out of one of my puttees, and we started off to find a Field

Dressing Station. On our way we ran into one of our own batteries which was engaged in shelling the Turks, and drawing a good deal of enemy shrapnel in return. I had no wish to interfere in their little quarrel, so we made a wide *détour* and finally reached the Dressing Station. It was crowded with the usual pitiable collection of blood-bespattered men awaiting their turn, and here and there lay others who would never again need human aid.

After dark all the wounded were taken across the battlefield in Jaipur carts to a part of the captured Turkish lines where our troops were bivouacking. It was a gruesome journey; once the cart stopped, and the driver, on getting down to see the cause of the trouble, found that the legs of a dead sepoy had got caught in one of the wheels. At last we got to the lines, where we found scores of other wounded. A kind friend lent me a red blanket which he had brought along on his saddle, and which was worth its weight in gold. Even with that to cover me I felt cold enough.

At dawn the next day the troops began to evacuate this spot in favour of another about three miles off and nearer to the river. An order was sent round that all the wounded who could walk the distance were to do so. I came to the conclusion that three miles in my present condition would be a bit more than I was good for, as my arm grated badly every time I moved. So I remained

where I was with a lot of others. Meanwhile my servant somehow managed to boil a tin of cocoa with my emergency ration, and this I shared with a wounded colonel next to me, who had earlier managed to get me some water. The cocoa was a godsend, since the dust blowing all over us as we lay on the ground was most unpleasant.

At about two o'clock in the afternoon, while the evacuation was still in progress and the wounded had not yet been taken off, the Turks started to shell the trenches. There were about six of our guns and two or three hundred infantry left who replied to them. All the wounded were hastily put in a deep communication trench, and I found myself sitting cross-kneed and wedged in with a lot of others, most of whom were unable even to change their positions. Indeed, I was barely able to move my left arm. The shells continued to come over, and when one landed on the parapet just in front of me, I began to wonder what would happen if they dropped one into the trench, packed as it was with wounded and helpless men.

Later in the afternoon the sound of rifle fire was added to the noise of the shelling, and we knew that the position was about to be attacked. Nearer and nearer came the ominous crackling, and in imagination we could see the long lines rising and running and falling and rising again. A perfect hail of bullets beat on the parapet of the trench. Just before dark, however, our men

got the upper hand and drove back the enemy with rifle and machine-gun fire.

Three times during the night the Turks came back to the attack with a great gust of fire that swept down on us like a storm in the Himalayas. Above the din of the artillery rifles cracked like a thousand whips, and the bullets hummed by over our heads or buried themselves with vicious thuds in the parapet. Three times our fellows drove them back. The defenders were as good soldiers as ever breathed, and knew their work well. Our front was lighted by star-shells, and with rifle and machine-gun we broke the Turkish line each time before it could reach the trenches.

By daybreak, in spite of our efforts, the position had changed for the worse. Unable to break our front, the Turks had got round on either flank. There was no sign of reinforcements; indeed we could hear the rest of the force heavily engaged in the distance with an enemy of their own.

There came a lull in the firing on our front, and the Medical Officer came round and told us that all who could possibly get away were to do so. I decided to take my chance rather than risk being captured. It was not an easy matter to get out of the trench, and after I had been helped on to the parapet could scarcely stand up, so cramped was I after sitting for fifteen hours in one position. Luckily I saw a Jaipur cart coming

out of the perimeter, and managed to get on to it with about three badly wounded sepoy more or less on the top of me. Hardly had we got on than the Turks opened a fresh fusilade all round us, and the bullets began to fly unpleasantly close. Our best chance was to bolt, and I got the driver to whip his ponies into a gallop. The Turks had by this time got round on both flanks, leaving only one side open to our retreat. One of the ponies was hit, which did not mend our pace. This, perhaps, was fortunate, since the cart was tossed about like a cockle-shell as it went over the ruts in the hard ground. We were thrown against each other mercilessly, and could not have borne a much quicker speed. Luck, however, was with us; the rifle fire died down, and by daybreak we were out of immediate danger.

Another difficulty then arose. Our track was intersected by numerous dry ditches, remnants, perhaps, of some obsolete system of irrigation. Our cart could not get across, and finally I left it and started to walk. As it got light a pitiful scene met my eyes. The desert was strewn with hundreds of wounded and crippled men, slowly and painfully dragging themselves towards the river. The boats, as we all knew, were some seven miles away to the south, a distance beyond the power of most of those who were struggling to reach them. They kept on, however, knowing that when night fell the Arabs would come out. No

one who had had experience of them was inclined to give up in despair. How many were eventually left behind I do not know, but I am sure that a large number of wounded must have failed to reach the boats.

About two miles away to my right I could see the Arch of Ctesiphon in the morning sun. Near it were some cavalry, whom I discovered later to be our own. I walked for about a quarter of a mile, and then stopped to rest and have a look round; presently to my joy I saw six gun-limbers coming in my direction from the camp I had left. I hailed them and clambered on to the seat of one between the driver and another wounded man. They told me that they had only ten rounds per gun left, and were going back to the boats to fetch up fresh supplies. A lot of the other wounded hastened to follow my example, and soon the limbers were crowded; it would have been possible to fill them ten times over.

The ride that followed was a nightmare that I shall never forget. From time to time we had to cross ditches three to four feet deep; the two-wheeled limbers went down and up the other side with a crash and a bump. Even an able-bodied man would have found some difficulty in sticking on, and it is a miracle that no one fell off. I had to use my left hand to support my right arm as each shock came, and nearly bit through my chin-strap at every ditch we crossed.

At last we came in sight of the boats, and I was never so glad to see anything in all my life. I was taken to a Hospital ship, and found the decks crowded with wounded, packed so close that it was almost impossible to walk about. I noticed several men of my own regiment there. The condition of the wounded was simply indescribable; their uniforms were torn and ragged and splashed with blood.

It was Wednesday morning when I reached the boat, three full days since we had started on our adventures. Curiously

enough, I found there the man who sat next to me in the trench before the battle, and who had his arm broken in the same place as mine. From him I learnt that the unfortunate Corporal K. had been killed.

Later, on examining my equipment, I found that a bullet had entered my haversack, smashing everything inside it without touching me.

After having some hot milk and bread and butter, which tasted better than anything in the world, I lay down on the deck and fell asleep at once.

IN TRINITY COLLEGE DURING THE SINN FEIN REBELLION.

BY ONE OF THE GARRISON.

EASTER Monday, April the 24th, 1916—not yet one fortnight old as I write—looked a day of peaceful thoughts if ever there was one. It was cool, bright weather. The Dublin hills stretched away to the south-west, a picture of immovable repose in the afternoon light.

Down the Dundrum road a band of the Veteran Volunteers—the “G.R.’s”—came swinging along at a steady pace, their faces towards the City. An officer on horseback led them. As he passed us, we recognised in him Major Harris of the Officers’ Training Corps of the University of Dublin. He stopped us. “Have you heard that the Sinn Feiners have risen in Dublin, and seized the General Post Office and Stephen’s Green, and shot several of the police?” The Veterans passed on their way to the city, leaving us bewildered. Some of them were to meet death within an hour of that instant.

Peace indeed! Rather madness and bloodshed this fine holiday afternoon. To a change so astounding the mind at first refuses to adapt itself. The blessed isolation from the horrors of invasion, for which we daily give thanks, suddenly replaced by that worst of all forms of strife—civil war. For the danger of the Sinn Fein is known to all in Ireland save,

apparently, to the authorities. It is not only a danger in itself, but it possesses all the potential danger of the spark amidst the gunpowder. And now at last it is at hand, and to each one comes the same thought,—to seek his duty and to do it. To him who has not the great obligation of defence of wife and family during the unknown dangers of the coming night, the cause of law and order and of the institutions which he holds dearest may appeal for all he can give. In the minds of each one of us the same question is being debated, and the claims upon him weighed one against the other. And to each the littleness of a few years of life speaks with the same quieting voice.

I was in Trinity College by four o’clock. I had already been in the city that same morning visiting a friend. There were then no signs of the fatal events proceeding elsewhere. The Post Office was actually being seized at the time I was sitting with my sick friend. But now how different! Carriage traffic had almost ceased, and crowds hurried, partly in terror, partly in curiosity, about the streets. An occasional shot was heard. But it soon became evident that the Rebels were virtually in possession of the city.

I left Trinity cautiously by

one of the side gates. I was anxious to ascertain, if possible, the magnitude of the movement and to get some idea of the numbers engaged in it. I visited the General Post Office, the central building in Sackville Street. It was a wreck. Glass littered deeply the path and pavement in front of it. Armed men stood behind its shattered windows. Useless barricades had been piled up within—mail bags, evidently filled with letters, to keep out bullets! Chairs and tables through which bullets would pass almost as easily! And, peering out from their defences, the unhappy warriors threatened with their rifles the scared crowd which alternately approached and ran away. At one window a mere boy was still knocking out the glass with the butt of his rifle. Above the building floated a huge green banner with the inscription in white letters, "Irish Republic." Truly *Der Tag* had come! But oh, how pitiful! A fantastic chimera, and death the sure and certain wage!

The Rebels were moving about freely in the streets. All seemed armed with rifles. The police had entirely disappeared. They had done all they could, and some had offered their lives in a vain endeavour to save the city. St Stephen's Green, which I next visited, was closed. A sort of barrier had been placed within the large gate facing the foot of Grafton Street. Behind it stood, with set face and in Sinn Fein uniform, an

armed man. He held his rifle at the ready. But neither military nor police contested his supremacy. A couple of lads of seventeen or eighteen years of age lay on the grass near by. They too were armed and equipped with rifle and bandolier. A man in the small crowd remarked to me on the juvenile appearance of these Sinn Feiners. What, indeed, could they know of right and wrong? What could they do to save themselves even if they knew the truth? It was a pitiful sight. One formidable-looking man of maturer years lay stretched in the most approved attitude, with rifle immovably directed towards Grafton Street. I estimated that if the distribution of men around the Green was everywhere such as it was at this point, 400 or 500 men might be within. One comforting inference could be drawn. No German officer was responsible for such strategy. For no officer in his senses would shut his men in an enclosure commanded by tall buildings on every side, from any one of which almost every corner of the Green could be reached. And as it turned out, this was just what the Sinn Feiners found to their cost a few days later.

I returned to the College but little wiser than I had left it. From the first the gates had been closed, and no unknown person allowed to enter. What force was within? I had come in almost direct from the meeting with Major Harris, and as he must moderate his pace to

that of his men on foot, and as I was on a bicycle, it seemed unlikely that even by this time he could have returned. Inquiry confirmed this view. At the Headquarters of the Officers' Training Corps I heard that several officers in khaki had been fired on, and it was believed to be doubtful if Major Harris would ever reach the College. In point of fact he never did. Approaching the town the Veterans divided into two parties. One of these was under command of Major Harris. The other, under command of Mr Browning, was ambushed and badly cut up by the Rebel fire. The survivors of both parties were finally driven to take refuge in Beggar's Bush Barracks, then in a state of siege, and into which they only penetrated by climbing over a back wall. The "G.R.'s" had gone on their route-march, as was their wont, totally unprovided with weapons of defence.

Thus it happened that Trinity College seemed almost without defenders. Major Tate, the C.O., was unfortunately away. But Captain Alton of the O.T.C., Lieutenant Luce of the Royal Irish Rifles, who was home from the front on sick leave, and Lieutenant Waterhouse were fortunately at hand. A few boys in khaki were about. There was no doubt of the seriousness of the position. Help from military or police was not to be expected for some time—possibly for some days. That the College had not already been captured was most inexplicable. It was

obviously the most central and commanding position in the city. There was the additional attraction of the military stores of the O.T.C. depôt. In this were kept some hundreds of service rifles and many thousands of rounds of ammunition. The loot of the buildings would supply many requirements of those in possession. And once captured nothing but the wholesale destruction of buildings, containing the most precious heirlooms of the ancient University, would suffice to dislodge the enemy. I visited the Provost. He faced the position with which he had been so suddenly confronted with calmness. Then I left for home by the Lincoln Place gate, having first received promise of a rifle when I returned. It was highly probable that no daylight attack would now be made, so there was ample time for a bicycle ride to the suburbs to inform my small household of my intention to remain in the College during coming events.

It was about six o'clock by the time I got back to the College. The ride in proved an anxious one. I had rather thoughtlessly put on a Swedish leather jacket which bore somewhat the appearance of a uniform. I had a pistol in my pocket. Several groups of the enemy seemed on the point of challenging me. It was evident I had made myself an object of suspicion, and capture was the best I could hope if I was stopped and searched. But at length I got back to the Lincoln Place gate and was ad-

mitted. A message had been got through to Beggar's Bush Barracks, and we knew that help from that quarter was no longer possible. By great good luck eight Anzacs, who had been on leave in the city, had taken harbourage in the College. The total number of defenders amounted to 44.

Sentries had, of course, already been posted at the gates, and others were stationed at important points of observation. After my arrival I spent some time on the roof of the Physical Laboratory, with a view to its utilisation as a point of observation during hours of daylight. Then came orders to sandbag the back windows of the O.T.C. headquarters. This was laborious work, but the younger men made light of it: filling the bags below and carrying them up the stairs. After this a little time was left me in which to practice the use of the service rifle. The pattern was new to me, but in half an hour, and under the instruction of one of the Cadets, I was sufficiently familiar with it to feel confidence that I could fire and refill with fair rapidity. To rank as a good shot with a rifle to which one was unaccustomed, under conditions when probably the sights could not be seen, was, of course, out of the question. But on the other hand, there was the comforting reflection that if attacked the fighting must necessarily be at close quarters and accurate shooting would not be required. Evidently under such circumstances the

principal matter was to master the purely mechanical conditions of quick loading and handling. With these comforting thoughts I practised myself upon the rifle—and a beautiful instrument it is, although marked as fit only for drill purposes—till I felt at home with it. I was also so fortunate as to get a dozen cartridges for my pistol, for which I had but one cartridge on entering the College.

The geography of the College ground requires some description for the benefit of those unacquainted with Dublin. The grounds of Trinity College cover about thirty-five acres, and form a roughly quadrangular area having a width of about 900 feet and a length of about 2000 feet. This area is surrounded by the most important thoroughfares of Dublin. The quadrilateral extends its greatest length in, approximately, a west to east direction. The principal buildings of the College—the magnificent Library, the Examination Hall, the Dining Hall, the Provost's House, the School of Engineering (building beloved by Ruskin), as well as the fine Belfry and the living-rooms of the students and of the staff—lie in the western half. The splendid frontal buildings of the College, with their exquisite pavilions, command a city view unsurpassed by any in the United Kingdom; the broad thoroughfares of Westmoreland Street, Dame Street, and Grafton Street converging to the

spacious pavement fronting the façade of the College.

At the eastern end of the Park are placed the modern buildings housing the various Schools of Science, many of which have been recently built by the Chancellor of the University, Viscount Iveagh. The Headquarters of the O.T.C. are placed along the extreme eastern boundary of the College grounds, and thus lie outside, as it were, the group of the Science Schools. Between the group of buildings lying to the west end and that lying to the east end of the Park there intervenes an open space devoted to the recreation of the students in normal times. Just now the existence of this area constitutes an added difficulty in the defence of the College. And it is an aggravation of the difficulties that telephonic connection between the west and east ends of the Park does not exist. For the City Exchange is closed to us, and this was the normal means of communication. Even to a novice this evil was at once apparent, and I thought of searching the Physical Laboratory for a telephone, which might be installed as a field telephone, but I feared that the requisite leads would certainly fail us. This want involved a serious degree of isolation of the main points of defence of the College.

The difficulties of the defence were obvious even to an unskilled observer. The railings and walls which bound the south and north sides of the Park are scaleable at any point. The wall on the north-

ern boundary is skirted by a lane, which may be in the enemy's hands. It is, moreover, commanded by the rear of the houses of Brunswick Street, which also he may hold. The railings separating the south boundary of the Park from Nassau Street are by no means unscaleable. So much for the College Park.

As for the practice grounds of the O.T.C., in which my first sentry duties lay, on the east side they are separated from a lane by a high wall surmounted by barbed wire. But this would not be a serious obstacle, and the lane is open at both ends to the entry of the Rebels. Moreover, the houses of Westland Row from their rear overlook almost the entire grounds from this eastern side. If they harboured the enemy and he knew how to shoot, it would render existence difficult for the garrison. The north end of the O.T.C. grounds is further overlooked by the high embankment of the Loop Line from Westland Row Terminus. And there was ocular evidence that the Sinn Feiners held the railway and patrolled the embankment. Under such conditions we began our watch of the College on the night of Easter Monday. This estimate of our difficulties must be read as that of one unacquainted with the art of war, and who had no share in planning the defensive steps actually taken.

My beat extended from the small side door leading into the Chemical Laboratory (and so into the College Park) to

the large gate opening near the main Lincoln Place entrance of the College Park. The inner gate, which limited my beat, had for better security been barricaded with a military waggon. Without, the couple of sentries watching the Lincoln Place gate could be observed and were within hail. It was part of my duties to keep in touch with these sentries, and to convey to Headquarters any alarm they might transmit to me. I had also to keep under observation the wall separating this part of the grounds from the lane, and to observe the rear of the houses overlooking the grounds.

Night now slowly closed in. The City without was plainly in a state of chaos. Shots rang out every now and again. Distant shouts and challenges were heard. Sometimes a more rapid succession of shots suggested more serious fighting. Slowly the precincts around became indistinct. Impending dangers, unknown disasters, seemed to fill the gloom. Was this indeed to be, perhaps, the last night of our ancient University? The question is no mere extravagance of the imagination. For so much of the very existence of so venerable a foundation is bound up with its century-old buildings, with its literary and artistic treasures, that sack and conflagration in a single night might obliterate practically all but its memory from the earth. So might perish Ireland's most priceless treasure—the University of Berkeley,

Goldsmith, Burke, Hamilton, and Lecky.

A sentry must not indulge in imaginings. I endeavoured to banish gloomy forebodings from my mind and to school my attention entirely into the immediate present. The thought of what might or might not happen, either to my College or to dear ones passing the night exposed perhaps to serious dangers, I drove from my mind. And indeed there was enough to claim immediate attention. There was constant coming and going through the now dark passage leading from the side door into the Park. Each individual must be challenged and recognised. In intervening moments the walls and buildings opposite must be watched. There were now only the City lights without, reflected from the cloudy sky, to shed any light in the space around me. A cause of uneasiness soon became apparent. Two adjoining windows just overlooking my beat, I discovered, had been recently opened. No lights were within. If the enemy was in possession of these windows, not sixty yards away, he might cover me at his leisure, and, having disposed of me, then pick off any one entering through the side door. He could from his position shoot right into the latter, and it was possible he had enough light to do so. But for these evils there was no remedy. The strict order given to all sentries and patrols was "No firing till attacked." And, of

course, even if an individual did show himself at the open windows, he might be only a curious observer. And presently I became aware that the hypothetical individual had become a reality. Some one was within—a man, apparently, with white shirt sleeves. I strained my eyes to discover what he was doing, and when I did so he drew back and vanished in the darkness within. Obviously he held the whip hand, and there was nothing for it but to trust to luck.

Slowly the hours passed. I kept this post for four hours, during the latter half of which time I had the company of a second sentry. Then I was relieved; and as my dinner had consisted of a single sandwich, I was glad to look for something to eat at Headquarters. It was cold enough to make a hot drink very desirable.

Bright lights are not permissible at Headquarters. In the kitchen only a feeble lamp dispels the gloom and reveals the incessant but quiet bustle which prevails. Cadets in their greatcoats are pushing in and out. The sounds of eating and drinking are mingled with questions and opinions as to what is happening. There is an atmosphere of expectancy which is not allowed, save inferentially, to reveal the anxiety which all most certainly feel. The talk is all in a low tone, as if the Sinn Feiner was listening without. It is reported that the Castle has been captured by the Rebels, and is strongly held. The office of the 'Daily Express,' and both Guinness'

and Jacob's, are believed to have also been taken. There are but few military in the city, and they can barely hold their barracks. It appears then that our own chances depend entirely on the speed with which troops can be brought up from the Curragh or from Belfast. Some think that the capture of the General Post Office means that telegraphic communication with England is cut, and that assistance from the other side of the Channel must consequently be long delayed. It is certain that the railway termini, or some of them, have been taken by the Rebels. Of this we have good evidence. Rebels have been seen patrolling the embankment overlooking our little territory. I myself, riding past the previous evening—it is now past midnight—saw heaps of barrels thrown over the high walls of Harcourt Street terminus,—apparently with a view to making barricades in the street beneath. The porters expelled from the station crowded the steps. What might the object of all this be? There was only one answer: to delay the arrival of troops in the city. These matters are discussed. The Anzacs listen; they say but little. They are magnificent of physique, and lithe of figure. How keen of eye and what unerring shots they were we soon came to know.

On the fire a huge pot holds water for making cocoa and for washing plates. There is bully beef and bread, and there is a sack full of apples. You dip

your cup—some one else has just been drinking out of it—into the hot water; you shake a little cocoa powder into it, and you drink when the beverage is cool enough. Nearly every one smokes, and few smoke anything but cigarettes. I am offered so many that I feel as if we were back in those apostolic days when men had all things in common.

I have just prepared a cup of cocoa and got some bully beef. The word "alarm" is said in a low voice at the door, and the speaker hurries off. Almost immediately we are without in the cool night air—listening.

A violent fusilade can be heard in the direction of the front gate of the College. The immediate alarm, however, is said to have come from our men posted on the roof of one of the Westland Row houses. They had been given a signal lantern—red light for danger, white for safety. It now seemed certain that the apprehended attack was about to be delivered. Concerted attacks at several points were probable. But at this stage it was impossible to say at what point our defence might first have to be directed. With rifles on cock we stood for about a quarter of an hour awaiting orders. The city lights reflected from the clouds dimly showed us the walls, but no foe appeared. Our patrols were out, and it was probable that the first call to action would come in the form of a shot fired at an invading enemy. But no further alarm

came. The distant firing was directed not against the College. And the attack was not on us.

The guard was to be relieved immediately. The selected men, of which I was one, marched off. We went round the Park relieving sentries. Finally, I was given a post of observation over the lane-way without the eastern boundary wall of the O.T.C. grounds already referred to. This lane can be observed for a considerable distance up and down through chinks in a great rolling door opening into it. It was an irksome duty, for the chinks must be carefully investigated at each turn of one's beat. Without, the lane remains silent and empty, as seen by the light of an electric lamp which burns at one end of it.

All things come to an end. Grey dawn slowly breaks. Objects insensibly become more and more distinguishable. At about 3.30 o'clock I am relieved, and return to Headquarters. Those off duty are lying down on the floor of a large store-room almost in darkness, for the light of dawn is as yet but feeble. Alongside forms lying prone, with rolled-up coats for pillow and one blanket serving as mattress and covering, sleep comes soon. But before yielding to oblivion I could not help brief thoughts on matters psychological. I had lately been worrying a good deal about various things, and often dreaded, rather than courted, a comfortable bed. I was now a more contented individual

than I had been for weeks. And it may be, I thought, that this is just the reason why so many return healthy and cheerful from the front. The life of action is perhaps, after all, the happiest. I have been making a grand mistake all along. That boyish instinct for the Navy was perhaps the truest wisdom. But now it is too late a day. This present episode can only be a late farewell to what might have been. But let me sleep while I can. There is only a feeble flicker of candle-light in the room, and one of the shrouded warriors snores soporifically. I am off——

“Turn out! We are going to evacuate this bally place, and all the stores are to be removed.” Alas, I had been but fifteen minutes asleep! But it is a wise decision. The quadrangles of the College we might indeed hold for some time. This open and almost defenceless courtyard must, in the event of attack, simply become a shambles. Shots, mostly revolver shots, fired from Nassau Street into the College Park, as reported by patrols, warned us of what to expect.

The sandbags are brought down from the windows, for they will be wanted elsewhere. The rifles are carried off on field stretchers, and, along with the ammunition, are transported to the quadrangles. Finally, every article which might prove of use to the enemy, such as clothes, provisions, blankets, culinary vessels, china, &c., are heaped

upon one of the great military waggons in the yard and dragged away to the Front Square of the College by a train of men. Some one suggests leaving a few dummy men in the windows. The idea is obviously good. A few caps are judiciously arranged on props in partial concealment. The building is locked up, and we evacuate our fort with such a brilliant exemption from casualties as marked the retreat from Gallipoli.

Daylight had now fully come, and the more concentrated garrison was to be distributed in various coigns of vantage in the quadrangles. One of the great windows on the stairs ascending to the Regent House was assigned to me, in company with Sergeant-Major B.

These front windows of the College command a view which extends the whole length of Dame Street. In the farthest distance is visible the corner house, the office of the ‘Daily Express,’ which is held by the Rebels. Opposite to it is the City Hall, which may be regarded as an outlying part of the Castle premises. In the foreground is the wide pavement, having the Bank of Ireland on the right and beyond it the Royal Bank. To the left the buildings form a curved façade, which flows into Grafton Street. Here are some of the finest offices in Dublin. Grattan’s statue and the equestrian statue of King William of Orange stand in the midst of the pavement. These regions are now empty.

Neither friend nor foe appears. The former because not strong enough to march the streets, and the latter because of the rifle fire from the College.

The Anzacs had been above on the roof of the College since an early hour. Owing to the strict order received from the Irish Command not to fire until attacked, many chances of "potting" Rebels had been missed. But later in the morning this order had been withdrawn. Already before daylight a despatch-rider of the enemy had been brought down by the fire of the Anzacs. It was wonderful shooting. He was one of three who were riding past on bicycles. Four shots were fired. Three found their mark in the head of the unfortunate victim. Another of the riders was wounded and escaped on foot. The third abandoned his bicycle and also escaped. This shooting was done by the uncertain light of the electric lamps, and at a high angle downwards from a lofty building. The body was brought in.

Later I saw him. In no irreverent spirit I lifted the face-cloth. He looked quite young; one might almost call him a boy. The handsome waxen face was on one side concealed in blood. Poor boy! What crime was his? That of listening to the insane wickedness and folly preached by those older and who ought to be wiser than he. And was not he, after all, but one of those who carry to its logical conclusion the long crusade against English rule which for

generations has kept peace from Irish hearts? More honest than many of his teachers, he has been led into crime and now pays the penalty. It is true, if truth exists at all, that this life cut short and the rancour and bitterness with which it was filled are as much the handiwork of the "constitutional" agitator as of many who are doomed to summary execution for this night's work. When will England appreciate the Irish temperament? When will our rulers learn that these rash and foolish sons of the Empire require quiet and resolute government, sane education, and protection from the fanatic and the agitator, to whose poison they are at present exposed from their earliest years?

Tuesday, April the 25th, was now a new day. The events of the past night seemed folded away, as if but a troubled dream. What would the new day bring forth? When might help be expected? With advancing day the numbers in the streets increased. It was evident that the public even yet had not realised the dangers of the streets. Shots from roof and windows did not seem to deter the curious from risking his life. Not a few were aimed from the roof and windows of the College at snipers lurking in surrounding buildings. One window in the top storey of a large insurance office was an object of special suspicion. A man and a woman had shown themselves at it more than once. They had been seen to fire into the streets beneath.

The shooting from the College was undeniably good. The window was turned away at a sharp angle from the College, and was distant about a hundred yards. Nevertheless, spirts of lime and powdered stone were sent flying from its embrasure at every shot. Whoever was within was certainly either very foolhardy or very stupid. To look forth even for the fraction of a second under such conditions was courting death.

There can be no doubt that the accurate fire maintained from the College was an important factor in the salvation of the City. The Bank of Ireland (formerly the Irish House of Parliament) was otherwise unprotected, but no hostile being could have approached its doors. Its whole front was in view of the College. The sentries, which in ordinary times never cease to guard its doors, were absent, but the building was safe. An attempt was, in fact, made to take possession of its roof, but it was frustrated. The many important and stately buildings—banks, insurance offices, business premises—of Dame Street and Grafton Street were protected from the rebel or from the looter in the same manner. The whole length of Westmoreland Street was kept clear by the College rifles; and even the strongholds of the enemy in Sackville Street were assailed from the northern end of the College. Regarding the position as a whole, the grounds and buildings of Trinity College filled the function

of a loyal nucleus, dividing the forces of the rebels and keeping open to the troops some of the principal thoroughfares of the City.

After being relieved, I joined the Anzacs on the roof. They were undoubtedly men fashioned for the enjoyment of danger. And certainly it would be harder to find nicer comrades. Alas for the thousands of these fine soldiers who have left their bones on Gallipoli!

Breakfast was at length to be had in the College kitchen. Thither we repaired according as we got off duty. There was bully beef, with bread and tea, administered by the amazed but indefatigable French cook. Those who were silly enough to criticise the menu had something more to grumble about later on. The fact was, we were in a state of siege, and no preparations had been made even for the small garrison requiring support.

Later in the day troops began to come into the city. They had, in fact, been marched direct from the Curragh to Kingsbridge. Others came from Belfast. Within the College it was, of course, impossible to find out what was happening without. But every hour, as the day wore on, the sounds of firing in the city increased in volume. Troops of khaki-clad men, too, occasionally passed the College. For us the situation was evidently more hopeful. The Rebels would now hardly be in a position to undertake fresh conquests: they must hold their own if they could.

Moreover, our garrison had somewhat increased in numbers. Partly the additions were refugee soldiers sent over by the Dublin Metropolitan Police, whose newly erected premises stands facing the Brunswick Street entrance to the College. Partly our recruits were O.T.C. men who had made their way in mufti to the help of their College.

The great event of Tuesday was the recapture of the 'Daily Express' offices by the military. We were at the time in ignorance of what was actually happening; for we were possessed with the idea that the Sinn Feiners held the Castle. When, therefore, we saw at the head of Dame Street men in successive waves rush across the street from the City Hall towards the 'Express' offices, we thought they represented the enemy in process of expulsion from the Castle. As a matter of fact the waves of men were composed of the troops. From our position in front of the College we could see that a terrific fire was being directed against the 'Daily Express' building: plaster and powdered brick were flying in showers from its façade. This fire was to cover the advance of our soldiers. But in spite of this we saw, more than once, one of the running figures pitch forward and fall. It was expensive tactics; and later a better method of dealing with the Rebel strongholds was found when the artillery came into the City. The fight seemed to last a con-

siderable time—about an hour at its greatest intensity—before the firing began to wane. Not till later did we learn that the final phase of the struggle took place, under deadly conditions for the soldiers, in the narrow passages of the newspaper office. But they were not to be withheld, and the Rebels were ultimately bombed out or captured.

This event took place on the afternoon of Tuesday. Shortly after a small body of troops entered at the front gate of the College—a welcome sight. But it was not certain if they were to remain for the night.

In the course of the afternoon it became necessary, in view of certain operations to be undertaken by the Regulars, to ascertain if Butt Bridge, which spans the Liffey near the notorious Liberty Hall, was occupied or not. The necessary scouting was assigned to me. Two of our O.T.C. cadets in mufti were to accompany me. We agreed that it was best not to remain together. I accordingly went by Tara Street, and my colleagues proceeded by Hawkins Street. My route being the shorter, I reached the bridge first. It was unoccupied. Being anxious to ascertain if Liberty Hall was occupied and in a state of defence, I crossed the bridge and traversed the pavement in front of the Hall. The building looked empty, but I noticed that some of the windows of the basement had been broken out. This, of course, might betoken the presence of inhabitants, and

suggested sniping. As I could not turn back in front of the building, I walked past it, and turned when near the railway arches crossing the street lower down. It was unwisely done. I had probably been seen from the Hall, for as I again passed in front of it two rifle shots were fired in rapid succession from one of the lower windows. I saw the smoke, so there was no doubt whence the shots came. If the intention was to hit me it was quite extraordinary they did not succeed, seeing that only some 30 or 40 yards intervened, and I was walking slowly. Two men just behind me, who seemed the only other pedestrians present, took to flight and ran across the bridge. This course I did not imitate, for I reasoned that as the bridge was commanded right across from the windows of Liberty Hall, flight might have the actual effect of drawing the fire of the rebels. No more shots were fired, and I met my O.T.C. supports on the bridge.

In spite of our better position no precaution appeared to be relaxed by Captain Alton on the ensuing night. My own duties lay at the railings and gate in the New Square, near No. 40. This house is at the end of the bay, and overlooks the entire central area of the Park. The railings beneath it command a view reaching across to Nassau Street. Here I passed two very cold hours peering across the lawn. I was to shoot any one seen beyond the railings:

none of our men were to quit the quadrangles.

When relieved, my brother sentry and I sought repose on the boards of the first floor of No. 40. But things were not so bad as they looked. Some mattresses were available, and I got half of one on which to sleep. My companion, however, deprived for so long a time of the pleasures of the cigarette, must have a preliminary smoke. He fell asleep with the weed unfinished. I was again unfortunate, for I had hardly dropped asleep when I was, by a mistake, summoned to duty. This time my business was to watch from the open window of the room in which we were. It was unpleasant work, for a very cold wind blew straight in, and, of course, there was no way of sheltering from it. Hour after hour passed. There was darkness within the room by express orders; even the dying fire had been screened from view of the window. Strange revolution of circumstances! Many an hour I had sat in this very room along with that kindest and most courteous of men, the late Dr Benjamin Williamson. His gentle spirit would, indeed, have viewed his old apartment with wonder. The academic furniture all gone, and the floor closely covered by sleeping soldiers. Danger and strife where, for years without number, the only contests were those of wit against wit, and the only victories those which the mathematician claims when the refractory

problem yields to investigation. Less than a year ago I was here with him.

Towards morning, as the objects in the Park were becoming distinguishable in the strengthening daylight, I became aware that a party of five or six men were stealing from the trees at the remote side of the Park. I was on the point of firing. Indeed it was while sighting that it seemed to me they were in khaki. This might be a ruse, and I confess to some moments of agonising indecision. I hastily roused a brother sentry who had fallen into a state of—well—mental abstraction, and asked him to use his eyes. He agreed with me that the invaders of the Park were in khaki. They were going eastwards, away from the residential part of the College, and had apparently entered from the Fellows' Garden. Their movements confirmed me in the idea that they were our own men; for they seemed to be avoiding detection not from my side but from the Nassau Street side of the Park. They were, to all appearance, inspecting the railings bordering that side of the grounds, and taking cover behind the shrubs which grow along this border. Presently they passed behind the Pavilion at the east end of the cricket ground, and a moment afterwards I heard a rifle shot fired from near by, followed by a second shot. The sentries in No. 38 had evidently opened fire. This was serious. The next moment there was a party running

towards us. Even then I was not quite sure of my ground. I threw the window farther open and shouted "Who are you?" The leading runner waved and called to us to cover them against fire from the railway. I now recognised one of our officers. It appeared that his party had really a narrow escape from a danger to which actors in this sort of warfare are peculiarly liable. The bullets which went near to hitting them were in point of fact from our own boys. And they made tolerably good shooting. A very small misunderstanding may give rise to such incidents. It is certain that similar incidents were not uncommon in Dublin in the days which followed. The sharpshooters had acted strictly on injunctions; but I suppose, with the evidence before me, my failure to do so was excusable.

I spent the rest of the night on this duty. When Wednesday, April the 26th, at length came, I was glad to get away from that window. There was now no bread in the College and no sugar, and the hardness of the ship's biscuits was something of scientific interest. But for all that I have never had a more delightful breakfast than I had that morning. The kitchen was filled with men trying to eat the biscuits. The interesting historical narratives of current events made it difficult to remember the duty of reporting oneself. I was again stationed at one of the front windows of the College.

There were adventurous people to be seen in the streets as the day got older. The impelling force of curiosity would appear to rank with the strongest passions of mankind. Here were bullets flying about, death lurking at every corner, and yet troops of foolish people running about the streets. There had been looting already in some of the shops, and in the midst of the broad pavement in front of the College a small ragged boy was rejoicing in a toy motor-car which was certainly value for three or four guineas. It was rather small for him, but he managed to sit in it and to pedal himself round Grattan's statue. Bullets were nothing to him. For the nonce he was of the fortunate ones, and a lordly toy was his to play with. In after years this trivial sport will stand for the Great Rebellion in his memory. So it is with us all, if only we could see our actions and thoughts in the light of history.

Troops were now coming into the College in large numbers. It was arranged with the consent of the Provost that the military in Dublin should take up Headquarters in the College. There was no doubt as to the mutual benefits to be derived from the arrangement. The weather had held out, and in the Park fresh young grass was found for the horses. The Examination Hall, the Engineering School, and part of the Dining Hall were thrown open to the men. Owing to the absence

of students a very large number of chambers could be placed at the disposal of officers as well as of the rank and file. These rooms were all in part furnished, and contained good sleeping accommodation. But in truth the Tommies off duty had little to do with rooms. They lay about and slept in the open all day, rejoicing in the sward of the College courts and in the brilliant sunshine. The senior officers enjoyed the hospitality of the Provost.

The immediate safety of the College was now assured. Our escape from utter destruction had indeed been marvellous. I heard the view commonly expressed among the officers that had the Sinn Feiners taken possession of the College buildings in force, nothing but shell fire would have dislodged them. Having regard to the great strength of the place, no other course but one which must probably involve the ruin of the buildings would be justifiable. Nor would any policy of starvation have availed to save the priceless treasures of the College from the same fate which befell every public building in Dublin into which the Sinn Feiner entered. With the Library, enriched at the voluntary expense of soldiers, the most precious heirlooms of ancient Irish civilisation would perish: with the exquisite School of Engineering, the most beautiful structure of the kind in the world would disappear: with the Provost's House, a treasury of art would vanish.

Early on Wednesday Liberty

Hall received its quietus. Two eighteen-pounders and the guns of H.M.S. *Helga*, brought up the Liffey, were used to demolish it. The noise was tremendous. To the general din was added the spitting of a machine-gun placed high on the tower of the Fire Brigade Station. When next I saw Liberty Hall its empty shell alone remained. Every floor had been blown out of it. It was stated that none of the Rebels had remained to face the attack. A few weeks ago I saw armed men keeping guard within this building to keep out the police: and this was known to, and suffered by, the authorities. It was known to, and noticed in, the Press. But nothing was done.

Early in the day I went on duty at the Brunswick Street gate. This is the main entrance and exit for troops and others communicating with the east and north sides of the city. I soon found myself busy. A sentry was, of course, given to me. I was to deny or grant admission or exit according to circumstances. Every precaution had to be taken. The smaller door was opened only in face of fixed bayonet and after preliminary parley as to who was without. There appeared to be one evident oversight in the military precautions at this point. The large business premises of Messrs M'Kenzie & Co. overlook this entrance and command it, more especially from the inner side. The building was apparently deserted. But if the enemy by any means gained

access to it the gate would obviously be untenable. As we were still none too strong, and the numbers and intentions of the Rebels were unknown, it seemed prudent to occupy the building. Accordingly thirteen regulars were put into it later in the afternoon. Its occupation continued till the rebellion was substantially put down.

Casualties began to come in. No. 15, a house in the College quadrangle known as Botany Bay and near the Brunswick Street gate, had been fitted up as an emergency hospital. It proved to be of the greatest value, not only for dealing with wounds, but for administering to the ailments of the soldiers within. The treatment of sore feet, for instance, was continually proceeding. A staff of Red Cross volunteers and members of the R.A.M.C. were available day and night.

At one o'clock on Wednesday night, or rather on Thursday morning, I got off duty. The orders were that after midnight no one was to be allowed in or out. The custody of the gate became, therefore, a matter of sentry duty. I resigned it accordingly to the sentry and a night porter of the College—a trustworthy man who had formerly served in the army.

I now looked for a place of repose. I had not had a total of two hours' sleep since Sunday night. Moreover, I was going lame from keeping on my boots for so long a time. This was the most imperative of my troubles. First I sought sleeping accommoda-

tion in No. 40. But the room was already full, and there were neither blankets nor mattresses for any one. The fire was by order not lighted, and open window and door permitted a cold wind to blow upon the unprotected sleepers. From these forbidding conditions I recoiled; and being too tired and footsore to go much farther, I retired to one of the laboratories near by, and, spreading a college gown on the floor, slept till morning. I awoke so stiff from the effects of my hard bed that it took me about ten minutes to rise to a sitting attitude.

We had now reached Thursday, April the 27th. The quadrangles presented an extraordinary appearance. Some 4000 troops were stationed in the College. Horses tied to the chains which enclosed the grass plots gave the place the appearance of a vast open-air stable or horse fair. Men stood in ranks or sprawled on the pavements or on the doorsteps—anywhere—sometimes closely packed and fast asleep in every conceivable attitude. Many of them had put in a hard night's work. A large number were of the Sherwood Foresters and of the South Staffordshire Territorials. Many of these men were very young, and most of them had but recently joined the Colours. Looking now at their sleeping forms and tired faces, one must remember that the work of rounding up and hunting down the Rebels is not only arduous, it is in the highest degree dangerous. Not a few of the

officers and men who had been through these nocturnal and diurnal operations told me that they would prefer being at the Front. At the Front, they said, you know the direction from which you may expect a bullet. Here the enemy is all round you. He lurks in dark passages and among chimney-stacks, and when at last you think you have hunted him down, you find yourself in possession of a peaceful citizen who gives some plausible reason for his presence. That these young fellows should be wearied after their night of peril and strenuous exertion was not to be wondered at.

On this day a dead soldier was brought in. He found burial in the Fellows' Garden, service being said by the Army Chaplain. This was not the only interment within the College grounds. Later, another soldier—whose grave is now inscribed "Private A. C. Smith, 2373, 10th Cavalry Res. Regt., killed 29th April 1916"—was buried in the College Park. The boy despatch-rider was laid to rest at an earlier date.

Then a little boy was brought in on a stretcher. He had been shot through the hand on Monday, and there was fear that the wound had become septic. The father accompanied him, but even in these circumstances was not admitted to the quadrangles. He told me that none of the family had tasted food since Monday night. The child looked very ill—too ill to cry or to complain—and on hearing this I left the man

in charge of the sentry and made my way into No. 15 to suggest the application of internal as well as external remedies. Hot tea was given to the little patient. There was rapid revival. He thanked us in a voice which never rose above a whisper. The manners of these little Irish children are sometimes lovely; and this child had all the confiding and appealing way about him which constitutes their special charm.

And it was quite true. The people were starving. Food supplies had early been exhausted or the shops had been closed. Wages had ceased, for there were no employers and no work to do. But wages would not have helped; there was nothing to buy. Relief of the starving was begun by the officers of the O.T.C. Later, on the Thursday, the Military Authorities humanely and wisely took the problem in hand. Stores were commandeered and warehouses opened, and the food distributed to the starving families. I heard that the people were so grateful they would do anything for the soldiers.

But I was yet to see a more terrible tragedy. There was the sound of the ambulance bell without. The van was admitted. It seems that the horse had been shot and a riding-horse substituted, and they had difficulty in getting the van farther than the College. Accordingly they sought first-aid at our Red Cross station.

A woman was lifted out,

The stretcher dripped with her blood. A glance showed that death was not far from her. It was a face without hope. A shocking wound was hers. Shot through the lower part of the abdomen, the infernal bullet used by the Sinn Feiners had done work which must surely be fatal. They tried to plug the wound. A little later she was brought on to hospital—where she died.

This woman had done no wrong. She was probably seeking food for her six little children when death met her. There will be no one to sing her sorrows in modulated verse. The guilty "Countess" may possibly one day evoke the strains of the bard. But this woman's anguish of farewell to her little children will be absorbed unnoticed—save by these poor words—in that great total of human sorrow which the mind cannot evaluate or even conceive.

Two eighteen-pounder field-guns were now in the College. To-day they were used to break up an enemy stronghold. The Sinn Feiners had seized and fortified a fishing-tackle and ammunition shop overlooking Carlisle Bridge. From this they maintained a fusillade upon every one within reach. The eighteen-pounders were brought out into Brunswick Street and anchored to the pavement by lifting some of the setts. They were trained on Kelly's shop (the stronghold referred to), the shells traversing the length of D'Olier Street. Eleven shells were put into the brick walls

of the premises. What the effects were within we could form no conception, but great holes were torn in the walls. The shells (shrapnel), we afterwards heard, penetrated into the adjoining house beyond and damaged a valuable photographic stock. The story that these field-guns were brought to the top of the College is, of course, absurd. They could be neither maintained on, nor fired from, a foundation of slates and rafters. Nor would it be a simple matter to hoist them up.

Fires were now raging in the city. With the approach of night the flames lit the sky. In the lurid heavens the planet Venus shone with extraordinary brilliancy.

As the struggle between the Military and the Rebels became more and more a series of isolated combats, the streets grew ever more dangerous. Even at my post at the gate bullets were constantly singing overhead. Whence they came it was impossible to find out. The only risk here, however, was from a ricochet. A case of an eighteen-pounder shrapnel shell, emanating from an unknown source, fell in the Provost's garden. All this Thursday night firing continued, sometimes breaking out in one direction, sometimes in another. The vicious rattle of maxims, and the tap, tap, tap of some quick-firer—wickedest sound of all—mingled every now and again with the crash of bombs, filled the night with a sense of horror and danger. The streets were in many

places barricaded and no one was permitted to pass. Indeed only the Military were now to be seen on the streets. Even the police, if a message had to come to the College, crossed the street at the double.

An hour past midnight on Thursday I left the gate in charge of the night watchman and the sentry and retired to rest on a sofa in the Fellows' Common-room. This was a most luxurious indulgence.

Conditions suggesting famine reigned in the College on Friday. And only for the plucky exertions of a messenger from the Junior Army and Navy Stores in D'Olier Street, even the Fellows' table might have been reduced to the ship's biscuits and bully beef which constituted the universal ration elsewhere. But the soldiers had known worse times and did not grumble. The lack of cigarettes alone disturbed Tommy's equanimity. There was a tobaccoist nearly opposite my gate. This being near the D.M.P. Office, felt, I suppose, under special protection, and opened to-day. On this becoming known, a deputation reached me from some of the Tommies to the effect that I would confer a great favour on them if I would buy them ten ounces of cigarettes. They entrusted me with a one-pound note. I was pleased with this mission, for as janitor I discharged very unpopular duties. There was no conceivable excuse they did not urge to get out of barracks, and I pitilessly listened to none of them. One poor lad who had

escaped—by another gate, I hope—was carried in on a shutter—drunk! Tommy is a forgiving creature. I got the cigarettes, and returned absorbed and popular.

If you want to study human nature—that human nature which constitutes your fellow-countryman—mix with Tommies. There is no shade of affectation about them. “It is every one for himself in the Army,” said one of them to me. And this is true of the lesser things. But Tommy hates really unfair dealing, and if selfishness leads to it he condemns it. He has a tender heart. I have seen a big man relieve of rifle and kit a footsore youngster on the march. And of his fine deeds in the field all know. Of course there are black sheep, but even the black sheep is, I suspect, not so black as he is painted. A handy article will be pinched by the black sheep. But he looks at things from a standpoint at which the theft is insidiously refracted into the joke. It is not the less wrong. But in any case we may forgive the few unrighteous for the sake of the many righteous. Moreover, I hold the theory that essentially the humbler classes are more honest than the educated part of the community. This theory is founded on observation, and I think it applies to the Army as it does to the rest of society. And then you must think of the things Tommy has to suffer—hunger and cold and danger. Just realise what he

has done for the terrified citizens of Dublin. After my few days with him I like him very much indeed.

Perhaps the most taking feature of Tommy is his childishness. “Have you got aw lead, Guv’nor?” “A what?” “Aw lead.” “He means a pencil,” says a neighbouring interpreter. Well, I had not got the desired article, but I had a pen, which I lent him. A letter was being written, for a makeshift postal service had just been established. He showed it to me with evident pride. It began, “Dear Mother, I write these from here hoping they will find you as they leave me in the pink.” . . . After all, this is no divulgence of confidence. I give no names. I was consulted as to the address. Having assured him as to the perfect nature of the writing, I was asked by a young fellow near by to “vet” a letter of a more sentimental character. With stiff and difficult fingers, but with no shyness whatever, he was writing to “Dear Sweetheart.” Every other line began with this address. The whole thing was the perfectly naïve pleasure of the child in showing his accomplishments. It is impossible not to feel drawn to these fine men. Human nature is naturally beautiful to us just as are the other phenomena of Nature. It is only when it is sullied by sins against the peace and goodwill of social life that it becomes ugly.

I fear the rule that the sentry is not to speak was occasionally broken by me—who

ought to know better—when in the dead of night we watched the gate together. I heard then the simple narrative of how home and occupation had been left for service of King and Country. Some were anxious as to what might be happening in their absence. But there was no boasting; no display of sacrifice; never a word of regret. They had only done what a brave man should do.

Several instances occurred which well showed the effrontery of the enemy. He was evidently anxious to know what was going on within the College. More especially he was probably anxious to ascertain the military force within. On the Thursday two men thrust themselves in among a body of soldiers entering at the small door under my charge. They were, of course, instantly seized. One shammed a deadly enmity to the other man; refused to stand near him, and declaring that he was himself an old soldier who wished to help us, accused the other individual of every wickedness. A bottle of whisky was found on this voluble person. The other man declared he had never before set eyes on his accuser. I put a stop to the dispute by placing them each in one of the deep doorways of Botany Bay, under a guard. I was anxious that they should not see what was going on. The departure of the guns at this moment called me away. When I returned I found the two prisoners had been taken

to Headquarters in the Front Square. Later, I heard they had been allowed to leave the College. They had, probably, ascertained everything they came to find out. Annoying as the incident was, it was impossible not to feel that the cool courage of these visitors deserved the success it met with.

It was, I think, on the Thursday that a strange demand was made on the hospitality of the College. An operative company, of well-known excellence, unaware of the extraordinary conditions prevailing in the City of Dublin, had reached the City on Wednesday. They found all the hotels closed and no possibility of getting accommodation. Eighteen members of the company took refuge with the Police. The Police sent across to my gate to know if hospitality—mere housing within the College—could be extended to them. Under the conditions, to grant this request was clearly impossible. Accordingly the stranded actresses and actors had to abide in the premises of the D.M. Police.

Then a change came over that house of retribution. Strains of clever song and sounds of pleasant laughter reached my gate, mingled with the crack of distant rifles and the crash of bombs. Cheerful faces peered from door and window. Inexorable duty brought me across to the D.M.P. barracks that afternoon. The scene within was worthy of Gilbert and Sullivan

at their best. The gigantic, uniformed Inspectors—grey of hair and upright of bearing—beamed with parental indulgence upon the graceful forms which tripped down the stone stairs or laughed and sung in groups in the hall. Among all the experiences of a week of novelties this was not the least novel. It may safely be predicted that such a scene of mingled gaiety and tragedy will never again visit the halls of that building. The trite saying that laughter and tears are near together seemed exemplified. I was carrying on a conversation with one of the huge Inspectors. It was about the battle of Tallaght in 1867—the last Irish Rebellion. I was surprised to find that the Inspector was unacquainted with some of the most interesting facts of that extraordinary contest. I told him of how a dozen of the Constabulary captured some hundreds of armed rebels, and to keep them from running away had cut their braces,—a clever ruse which might well be matter of instruction to a police force, and which, I hear, has been used at the Front in the case of German prisoners. But no, he had never heard of it, and was in great delight at the idea. Nor had he any reluctance in imparting it to the assembled company. “Mister Finnigan, Mister Finnigan,” he shouted to a distant Inspector just as gigantic as himself, and just as paternal of countenance, “Do you hear what — says? How they kept the rebels from

running away? They cut their braces. Ho, ho, ho!” Then followed shrieks of laughter from giddy youth.

There were some strange happenings also within the College. There were two cases of sudden lunacy: one among our own O.T.C.; the other case was that of a Sinn Fein prisoner. Lieutenant W—— gave us a horrifying account of the treatment dealt out to the latter, who was violent. “It took four of us to hold him down. We tied his hands behind his back, and we tied his feet together. Then we laid him on a table and wound ropes round him and the table. Finally we wrapped a blanket round his head.” “I suppose,” said one of the Fellows of the College, whose remarks are generally worth listening to, “I suppose you call that ‘First Aid.’” The strangest part of the story was the effects on the prisoner. He was left in the mummified state for six hours. At the end of that time he was found to be quite sane—except with regard to his political convictions.

A feature of these curious times was the prevalence of extraordinary rumours as to what was going on in the world outside. The tendency to imagine the worst was consistently manifested in these reports. Verdun had fallen; there had been a great naval battle disastrous to British supremacy; there had been a landing of Germans on the East Coast of England. With such items of news we were regaled, and on the most con-

clusive evidence. Nor were events nearer home more favourably reported. The number of risings in the Irish counties and the strength of the Rebels were alike exaggerated. All this did not conduce to our peace of mind. Fortunately the immediate surroundings were too engrossing to permit us to reflect on the calamities which appeared to be crowding upon Great Britain during our temporary sequestration from the newspapers.

For, in point of fact, all postal connection with the outer world was cut off. Such local papers as appeared, at first contained only the Military Proclamations. These were brought in by the soldiers, and proved disappointing reading. In the City the first (and last) number of the extraordinary 'Irish War News' had appeared on the Tuesday morning, a small and very seditious sheet, price one penny, and headed, "Vol. I. No. 1." It contained the proclamation of the Rebel leaders.

On Friday the Military appear to have finally disposed of the Rebels in the General Post Office. It was only carried through by the all but complete destruction and burning of the building, the outer walls alone remaining. Fires were now increasing in number on the north side of the river. It was related that looting was going on, on a most disgraceful scale. Shops of all sorts were broken open and the goods freely distributed to the citizens of the Irish Republic. Men stripped off their old clothes

and dressed themselves anew in the open streets, donning fashionable suits. Women selected jewels for their personal adornment, and rich and rare were the gems they wore on toil-stained fingers and grimy wrist. Watches were carried off heaped in aprons. Toys were given to the young. Fruit and champagne and other expensive luxuries were freely partaken of. The wines were in some cases retailed for a few pence the bottle. Book-shops only were immune from attack. It is related that some officers captured by the Rebels on Monday were conveyed by the enemy to a tobacconist's shop, and with true Irish hospitality were treated to the best cigars, the owner of the shop having fled.

I engaged in looting operations myself. Barbed wire was required by the Military Authorities. As there should have been plenty of it in M'Kenzie's stores near the gate, I suggested a raid on these premises. But, in spite of a fairly complete search, none of the desired wire was to be found. We could only conclude that either the enemy had been before us or the owners had secreted it. All uncivilised organisms are thieves. A proclivity so natural must be attended in its gratification with pleasurable sensations. I can vouch for the very enjoyable nature of looting operations.

On this Friday night I ventured on a cycle ride out to my house. The desire for a bath and a change had become

a mania. I got a pass, and although strongly urged not to go, I traversed the dark streets in safety. Within the City all lights had been extinguished. Only an occasional shot or the challenge of a sentry showed that the City was inhabited. I carried a bicycle lamp, as I most feared the attentions of our own men, who might well conclude I was an enemy despatch-rider. I was frequently challenged. I confess I was glad when I got into the lighted area outside the canal. I returned to the College early the ensuing morning. The streets were in a most dangerous state, and few ventured abroad. House-top fighting was specially lively in the neighbourhood of Upper and Lower Mount Street. I had to call on a relative living in the former street. Bullets had been fired through her window, but, contrasted with many of the inhabitants of Dublin, she had but little annoyance.

Saturday the 29th was to be my last day at the gate. There were now available many better fitted for such a duty. I was given leave for Sunday. In the streets Saturday was marked by a certain liveliness. Prisoners were coming in or passing in batches all day. A poor and pitiable lot they looked. Surrenders were taking place all over the City: surrenders accepted on unconditional terms only. The leaders were now in the hands of the authorities, and the Sinn Fein Rebellion was in a fair way to be a thing of the past,

and to take its place in Irish history as one of the many insane rebellions which constitute its principal episodes.

Late that night I accompanied Captain Alton to the top of the look-out tower of the Fire Brigade Station. The view northward was sublime and terrible. Acres of flame and red-hot buildings stretched across the middle distance. The lurid light, reflected on rolling clouds of smoke, rose and fell as roof and walls toppled over. Fresh fires appeared to be springing into existence at a point to the north-east, and it really looked as if we were witnessing the wholesale destruction by the devouring flames of the entire northern side of the City. The night was still, or the damage had been far greater than it was. The Brigade was said to be overwhelmed with the magnitude of the work assigned to it—as well it might be; but undoubtedly it did invaluable service. And its work was in some cases done under the fire of the Rebels. Two and a half million pounds' worth of property were destroyed during the rising.

And from this tower, looking over unhappy Dublin, stretching like a map beneath us, we seem to be reviewing the whole miserable story. The growth of lawlessness, dating back to days of cattle-driving and boycotting. To the landlords every evil was to be traced. Settle the land question and you would have a peaceful and prosperous Ire-

land. Well, the landlords are gone and still you have rebellion. The long, pernicious Aberdeen régime, year by year bringing authority more and more into contempt. The laxity towards the Larkinite movement; the folding of the hands, no matter what might be done in Liberty Hall. "We serve neither King nor Kaiser, but Ireland," stood for months writ across the face of that house of sedition; but still all was well. Then we have the pressure of Home Rule, leading to the arming of the North. Next comes the arming of the South. Finally arises the usual rift between the "constitutional" and the unconstitutional. All these long series of ominous events mishandled, or not handled at all, by a helpless Government.

Hundreds of the untimely dead lie beneath us in the stricken City. Upon hundreds of others the shades of death are even now closing. The ruined, unhappy leaders are there: now at length seeing all their own mischance. The pitiful dupes who took their word for the future of the "Irish Republic"; and now only look forward to death or penal servitude! Others, just as guilty, lurking in hourly fear of detection! The orphaned children crying for mother and father! Ruined lives and ruined business!

All this and far, far more make up the tragedy at our feet.

And the future? Nothing can be more gloomy save the miserable present. Does any one believe that this is indeed the end of madness in this unhappy land? A bloody and desperate war to claim for its victims all we have most brave and most loyal. And when that is past our wretched domestic politics all over again, with the certainty that sacrifices for King and Empire will count for nothing. Is this sea of lambent flames, this harvest of death, a hopeful augury for the future of self-governing Ireland? Who will be found to educate my fellow-countrymen to that self-control which accepts the victory in the Senate as the final verdict? Who will be found wise and strong enough to waken them from the phantasmagoria of vain and foolish dreams to the sober light of day? Be very sure that till that measure of self-mastery is attained, and till that awakening is accomplished, this is not the end of violence. To-day you deal with the Sinn Fein: to-morrow you deal with Whom?

Truly our future is as lurid as those rolling clouds which, rising around us into the night, dissipate in space the hard-won wealth of the loyal citizens of Dublin.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

MR W. M. HUGHES, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA—
THE "SETTLEMENT" OF IRELAND.

IT has been said by those who believe our present governors indispensable, that there are no men in the Empire capable of taking their places. And though none but a self-satisfied politician would accept this contemptuous estimate of Britain's intelligence, we may admit that it is to-day more difficult for a great man to emerge than ever it was. In the first place, all the avenues to power have been carefully blocked. Political truces and coalitions do not throw a public career open to the talents. How shall we test a man's courage and energy, if he be not allowed to show his qualities in the open field? In the second place, the democracy, as we know it—Aristotle described it as "of the fifth class"—is not friendly to the great. It judges men by speech, not by action; and it would rather fall in ruins under the guidance of a familiar leader than be lifted to victory by the courage of an unknown hero.

Yet in spite of the stumbling-blocks which lie in the path of him who aspires to government, one man has come forth during the war to speak with the voice of wise authority. In

four brief months Mr W. M. Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia, has made himself heard from one end of Great Britain to the other. Nor did he visit us with a message of flattery upon his lips. Greatly daring, he lashed the follies of the English people and the English Government with a force and truth which from a home-bred man would have been greeted with cries of "treachery." He has denounced our prevailing policy, or lack of policy, standing upon platforms side by side with those who are responsible for it. He has been heard and supported by men who hate his opinions, and who have given years of their lives to see that these opinions shall not prevail. And now at last Mr Lloyd George, who, if he has not been hiding an unexpected wisdom for the last ten years, should look upon Mr Hughes with the cold eye of contempt, has condescended to write a Preface for his Speeches.¹ It is an engaging paradox which, while it baffles us, gives us a glimmer of hope for the future.

That Mr Hughes is an orator there is no doubt. He speaks

¹ "The Day," and After. War Speeches by the Right Hon. W. M. Hughes, Prime Minister of Australia. With a Preface by the Right Hon. D. Lloyd George, M.P. London: Cassell & Co.

always with force and clarity. His themes are ever the same—the war, and the organisation of industry which must follow the war. His phrase glows with the sincerity of one who will not diverge by a hair's-breadth from the course which he believes he ought to follow. He has been a politician; he is the leader of a Labour party; and he speaks like a statesman. In manner and substance his speeches are far as the poles apart from the speeches of our demagogues. He admits no compromise; he does not palter with the truth. It is not for him to soothe the susceptibilities of this group, or to meet that group half-way on the road of heresy. He does not shrink from laying the lash upon the backs of those who he thinks deserve it. In one of the last speeches he made in his own land he attacked the miserable Syndicalists, the wretches who say, "Why should I fight for Australia? — the capitalists own Australia," with a bitterness and a justice which not one of our politicians would dare to emulate. "If the world depended upon the strength of the arms of these people, who speak as lovers of liberty," said he, "it would have been in chains to-day. These men sneer at patriotism, because the very sound of it cuts them to the quick, because patriotism is based upon the sacrifice of self, and their religion is the apotheosis of self. Self is the beginning and ending of every thing they have. These men know no nationality, religion,

or principle, and in the name of Unionism and Labourism I pass them out like devils." It is good to hear honest talk like that, while the foolish flattery which serves our leaders of the people for argument still rings in our ears. For many a long year the Syndicalist and the anti-patriot have been told by our politicians that they are the sole and last repositories of wisdom, that whatever they think and say bears the stamp of eternal truth, that they have to demand only privileges and that duties will take care of themselves. And then comes a leader of labour from overseas to tell the working men of England and Australia that it is their business to serve their country, and that if they refuse the sacrifice they are but foul parasites, who "have attached themselves to the vitals of Labour."

With equal fury he denounces those sad personages who at the outset of the war declared that "nothing divided England and Germany worthy of the sacrifice of a single human life." We know them well: they were the friends and supporters of the Government, men close in the confidence of Ministers, and they waited for their proper castigation until Mr Hughes came. They have not waited in vain. "I confess," says Mr Hughes of them, "that to think that a man boasting British blood in his veins would utter such sentiments fills me with anger and nausea. Nothing now dividing England and Germany worthy of the sacrifice of a

single human life! Why, everything divides us. The gulf between heaven and hell is not wider than that between Right and Might, between civilisation and barbarism." And again he says: "I know that the teaching of history and the lessons of our present experience cannot move such men. I know that no appeal to patriotism, of which indeed they are incapable, can influence them, for that robust and passionate love of country is an inherent gift of virile and resolute men. That pallid, feeble, sickly, and spineless thing in which they wrap themselves is the measure of their own anæmic souls." Thus Mr Hughes very properly characterises the miscreants who saw no division between England and Germany, and who hoped, in their practical sentimentality, to grow rich by trading with both belligerents!

And Mr Hughes does not visit us as a mere orator. He has given his proofs that he can act as well as speak. Before he left Australia he had handled the German peril as no one in England has dared to handle it. Our Ministers, still tender of our adversaries, still hoping after the war to resume pleasant relations with Germans, have left thousands of aliens uninterned, and have permitted many commercial enterprises controlled by our enemies to be tenderly nursed. In all kinds of places we still feel the mysterious incidence of the German hand. So patiently had we submitted to the German yoke before the war

that we were compelled at its outbreak to make Baron Schroeder a British citizen. In Australia, too, they were sensible acutely of Teutonic pressure. They are sensible of it no longer, thanks to the fearlessness and promptitude of Mr Hughes. When war was declared, it was found that the great metal industries of Australia were controlled by Germans. Lead, copper, and zinc were held firmly in the grasp of our foes. They had agents in London and in Frankfurt, and even while the war was in progress these agents sold the metals which were necessary for our defence to the British Government. The spelter, which the Germans used for their munitions, came from Australia, and by a cruel and shameful irony was employed to kill Englishmen and Australians in France or in Gallipoli. Nor is that all. The spelter, the product of our own dominions, which the Germans bought for £30, cost us no less than £120.

As Mr Hughes says: "That this has not been our epitaph is because Providence has been very good to us, and because the Navy has saved us from national degradation and destruction." But Mr Hughes was not content to deplore the slough into which a misplaced trust in Germany had plunged his country. He instantly set about repairing the injury which Australia had suffered. We will let him tell the story in his own words. "Now what we have done," he says, "is this. We have wiped all those

agencies out in Australia. We have purged every company of every German shareholder, whether he was natural-born or whether he was not. There is only one way in which you can do this thing—do it with such thoroughness that the Germans will avoid this country as though it were the very plague itself. We have compelled the companies to buy out. We have robbed no man, German or Englishman, of his fair rights. Every share that a German held has been bought at market price. So much is their due. Let them have their pound of flesh, but, in God's name, let them be gone."

"Let them be gone,"—that is the only counsel which we, or the Australians, should give to the Germans, who have abused our hospitality and prepared for war in what they pretended was a time of peace. And to Mr Hughes belongs the credit of achieving that which none of our supine Ministers dared to attempt. Nor is the resolute treatment of aliens the only service which Mr Hughes did to his country. He has put into practice the gospel of industrial organisation, which he has eloquently advocated in this country. He has given us no advice which he has not urged upon his own fellow-citizens, which he is not ready, if power be granted him, to carry out himself. Agriculture, for instance, has hitherto been completely unorganised in every country, and now Australia has made the experiment, with gratifying success, of offering to the farmers a minimum price

per bushel for all wheat grown on new land. Here is the sequel as Mr Hughes tells it: "As a result of the guarantee offered," he says, "and of some subsidiary inducements, Australia produced last harvest about two and a half times as much wheat as ever was produced before. Translated into terms of bushels, their greatest output before this last harvest was about 60,000,000 bushels; the present harvest is about 140,000,000 bushels." These figures need no comment. What they mean in war-time is plain for all to see.

And after wheat there came the question of freights. Mr Hughes, like the provident man that he is, understood that the best way to meet the extraordinary expenses of the war was to increase the profitable sale of Australia's products; he understood also that to sell these products he must have freights. So, instead of waiting to see what might turn up, he proposed, "in order to prevent a scramble in the freight market, that the Commonwealth should be the only charterer of freights." The proposal was agreed to. And what was the result? Australia has had freights at 95/- and even less, and it has freights to-day at 110/-; while the Argentine, which left its industry unorganised, has to pay 185/-, though it is some four thousand miles nearer to Great Britain than is Australia.

But the history of the sugar industry affords Mr Hughes a still better example of useful

organisation. Seventy years ago the English free-traders, for the sake of pedantry and cheapness, deliberately destroyed the prosperity of our West India colonies. At the same time, to prove that their sentimentality was wholly sincere, they encouraged, by the purchase of slave-grown sugar, a system which they had used all their rhetoric to condemn. In vain did Lord George Bentinck and Mr Disraeli speak in defence of the West Indies. To buy in the cheapest market had become a religion, and "cheap sugar" sounded in the ear of the people like a new gospel. Now see what followed! The West Indies, to which we owed every protection we could give them, were engulfed in ruin, and not even the busy import of bananas has restored them to prosperity. The English people got its sugar cheap, to be sure; it also got it nasty; and has had to content itself with a base product ever after. And our enemies profited vastly by our pedantry and our greed. By encouraging their industries we made them richer and stronger, and thus better able, when the hour struck, to aim a blow at our very existence. Our cheap sugar, therefore, has cost us dear, as all things will cost us dear, when their admission to our markets is the result of letting things alone, of professing to believe that the constant employment of our people, the sound health of our children, the security of our Empire, are all as nothing when weighed in the scale

against the thrice worshipful, all-holy cheapness.

In Australia the superstition of Cobden was not accepted as an article of faith, and to-day the sugar industry of Queensland is perfectly organised. "Every farmer," says Mr Hughes, "who puts in his cane, does so knowing that he will get for this season, and the season after, a definite price. Similarly with the raw sugar miller. The refiner, with whom they have arrangements, receives his price for refining. The manufacturer of jam and confectionery knows for three years the price at which he can buy his raw materials, and the householder knows the price at which he can buy the finished article." There we get the antithesis of the pernicious doctrine, *laissez faire*, and the fact that Mr Hughes has done what he thinks just in his own country gives him a full right to say what he thinks just in ours. He says it, too, in a style which is forcible and never overdone. He knows nothing about the trick of coloured speech, which has long influenced the people of Great Britain to its undoing. He is no Lloyd George to promise in periods of gawdy rhetoric boons which he can never confer. It is of duties that he prefers to speak, not doles. He is no Asquith that he should use a thousand arid words to express nothing. When the Prime Minister speaks you are conscious of a complete severance between his brain and his lips. His phrases

are counters, not coins. It is his custom to befog his hearers with dry, set sentences, which belong not to him exclusively, but to any one who has mastered the dialect of the leading article. Mr Hughes' method is very far different. The words which he uses are intimately his and his alone. His speech is closely related to his thought. It is not for him to deceive his audience, or to wander carelessly round about a meaning. And so he has achieved what we thought impossible: he has made his presence known and felt in our inert democracy.

He came to England because he had a message to deliver, and he has delivered it in plain, unconciliatory terms. He advocates all the policies which Mr Asquith and his colleagues have always detested. Firmly he upholds, for instance, the scheme of Lord Roberts. "I only know," he says, "that Australia has been able to do what she has, because we adopted as the corner-stone of our Democratic edifices the system of compulsory military training. We believe that there is but one way by which a nation, being free, can remain so, and that is that every man shall be willing to defend his country, his home, and his liberties." It is commonly said in this country by those who would let all things slide, that had we enforced military training before the war, it would have profited us nothing. Mr Hughes does not hold that opinion. To this system, he says, and he has

had ample means of testing the truth of his assertion, "we owe that complex and widespread organisation for training officers and non-commissioned officers, for manufacturing small arms, ammunition, clothing, and so on, without which we should have been almost hopeless in this great struggle."

As we in England made no preparation for war, so, unless we listen to the voice of Mr Hughes, we shall make no preparation for peace. We still stand committed to the same system of free imports, which enabled the Germans to make ready their great armaments and to make a prepared attack upon the liberties of Europe. The military expansion of Germany went hand in hand with her industrial expansion. The big guns which battered the fortresses of Belgium and France were purchased with British gold. The roots of German enterprise went down deep into our commercial system. Our home markets felt the weight and pressure of the Teuton's hand. And if we do not arouse ourselves from our lethargy, we shall fall again beneath the yoke of German slavery. In the House of Commons no word of protest is heard. The members of the coalition who were once pledged to protect the industry of Great Britain, preserve an obstinate silence. An ill-omened truce has paralysed their minds and tongues. But Mr Hughes is a party to no truce. He is still master of

himself and his opinions, and he is free to explain as he does that things can never be the same after the war, that in self-defence we must change a commercial system of which we never had a right to be proud.

And at the very outset he strikes a note of warning to which all Englishmen should lend a patient ear. The standard by which he tests our commercial position before the war is not that of commercial profit, but of national honour and safety, and he tells us plainly that unless we reform that system we shall once more expose our throat to the assassin's knife. Security—it is that we must aim at before we aim at wealth or comfort. The task which lies ahead of us is to extirpate, “root, branch, and seed, the German control and influence in British commerce and industry.” Nor is it enough to say that, as at present all markets are closed against German goods, no steps need yet be taken. It is absolutely essential to declare what our policy is to be without delay. We must not compromise with that which is as obviously necessary to our salvation as the energetic conduct of the campaign. Those who propose to trade with Germany as usual after the war Mr Hughes convicts of treachery to their country, of a willingness to sink back into the condition of unemployment which for many years has been our disgrace. How shall we find employment for our own countrymen if we insist, for the sake of cheapness, upon

living by the labour of others? And when once peace is signed, it will be too late to frame a new policy. The new policy must be framed now. Then, says Mr Hughes, “five millions of men and more now engaged at the front or on war work will be thrown back upon the industrial market. Unless we prepare they cannot be absorbed. If we allow Germany to dump her goods here, they certainly cannot be absorbed.” How will it profit us to help Germany to pay her war indemnity, if the veterans who have fought for us return home to find no work awaiting them, but only the prospect of cheap food and no money to buy it with? One thing is imperative: we must organise, if we would not make our victory of no account. “No piecemeal scheme will do,” says Mr Hughes. “It is not one industry that needs organising, but all. And we must organise from the bottom to the top. Not only must every industry be covered, but the benefits of the new policy must saturate every stratum of the social pyramid.” We must get our food supplies, our metals, our raw material within the Empire. To achieve this we need pin our faith to no theories of political economy, we need subscribe to no doctrines. It is not a question of free trade or fiscal reform; it is, as we have said, a question of national security. In some cases we must enforce protection; in others, prohibition will be necessary; but whatever steps we take, we must see to

it that we are masters in our own house, and that never again we shall live in this fair England of ours on the bland sufferance of German intrigue. Truly the cause of freedom and honour has not been pleaded with a better eloquence than by Mr Hughes. "I can understand men," he said at the Queen's Hall, "whose trade with Germany before the war was considerable, dreading any change. I can understand these agents of Germany, who are to-day acting as caretakers of great industries, fighting desperately on behalf of our masters, our mortal enemy. But I cannot understand why Labour should couch a lance for this discredited and hopeless policy of *laissez faire*. What has it done for them? Why, everything that Labour has to-day, every improvement in wages and conditions of employment, has been gained by organisation, industrial and political. But industrial organisation and all industrial laws, factory Acts and the like, are the negation of *laissez faire*. Their very foundation is a denial of the right of freedom of contract, the great underlying principle of *laissez faire*. Labour owes nothing to *laissez faire*. *Laissez faire* has done nothing for Labour."

Indeed, we admire no quality in Mr Hughes more highly than the candour with which he addresses the Labour party of Great Britain. We cannot be proud of our representatives of Labour, who, lulled to sleep by the song of free trade, have thought it was enough to pro-

tect their industry and to leave unprotected the products of their industry. Their easy submission to the doctrine of cheapness proves how little they have understood the proper goal of their own ambition. But Mr Hughes has not been content to flatter them. He has let a flood of light in upon the dark places of their self-esteem, and has thus shown himself vastly superior to the noisy crowd of candidates and office-seekers, who for years have filled them with false hopes and false theories. He has no sympathy with their general denunciation of capital, merely because it is capital. He does not hold as a lofty ideal their practice of retarding the pace of their work, of taking the least efficient as the measure of industry, lest they should make an undue profit for their employer. While he insists that the working men have duties, he admits also that the employers have rights—an insistence and admission which must sound strange to the ears of men bedevilled for years by the obsequious praise of demagogues. "To retain the fruits of victory," he says, "Britain must, at her peril, have such conditions as will breed a numerous, healthy, virile people. These include payment of reasonable wages, continuity of employment, and healthy labour conditions. But, in order to insure these things, British Labour must be organised. If the population is to be employed, the British employer must know where he is.

If he is to pay decent wages, he must have his home market, and, if needs be, be aided in the markets of the world." There is a doctrine, new and discomfortable to the syndicalists and other irreconcilables, who too long have dominated the Labour of England.

Thus with our industries organised, and the bonds of commercial union made fast between England and her dominions oversea on the one hand, and our Allies on the other, we need not fear again the cunning, stealthy encroachment of the Germans. And let it be remembered that in doing his best to arouse a spirit of energy and patriotism in Englishmen, Mr Hughes never once appeals to their greed and selfishness. He is, as we have said, no demagogue touting for votes. He does not ask how much the people will swallow. He tells the people what he believes is good for it, and thinks that he has done enough. Nor does he limit his vision by the claims of commerce and industry. He cherishes the larger hope; he keeps before his eyes the larger scheme. "I hold very decided opinions," he says, "upon the relations between the Mother Country and the Dominions after the war. I hope you will have a policy which will make the word 'Empire' mean something more than it has meant hitherto. We have the means at our disposal, and we can cement for ever a Federation — Empire — call it what you will — which will ensure the peace of the world." Not even Mr Asquith's indifference

will quench, not even Mr Churchill's door of good British oak will be banged against, that aspiration; and as the war has proved that the people of England is wiser, stauncher than its leaders, we have a firm assurance that the Federation of Mr Hughes' hope will presently become a fact. That he went to Paris was a guarantee that the interests of the Empire and the Allies would not be sacrificed by our politicians. We only wish that we could keep him at our side to point out the path of organisation after the war. He is one of the few among living men who could save us from floating down the stream of chance like a piece of driftwood. And there is a danger that he will give up to Australia what surely was meant for the whole and undivided Empire.

Mr Hughes, then, is the resolute champion of organisation. The English Government prefers to let things slide. Who knows what will turn up, if we blow on our nails and embrace the doctrine of Dr Pangloss? Since the war began Mr Asquith and his friends have cheerfully made themselves the sport of fate, and now and again some sort of doubt as to their wisdom must creep even into their timid, sanguine minds. The hard case of Ireland, for instance, can hardly fill them with pride or satisfaction. When they came into office firm and resolute government was fast restoring Ireland to peace and prosperity. Compelled by the threats of Mr Redmond, they

substituted for firmness and resolution a mixed policy of fear and nonchalance. No sooner did they feel their dependence on the Irish vote than they disturbed a tranquil country with promises of Home Rule, and stirred up afresh the old discussions between the orange and the green. And when war broke out, they determined to govern Ireland by not governing at all. This was a determination very welcome to Mr Birrell and his leader, who worship inaction with a fervent heart. Straightway they began to deceive themselves and their countrymen. They boasted of the magnificent response which the South of Ireland had made to the call for recruits, when they knew that the response was not magnificent at all. Everything was done under their auspices that might flatter Ireland. Ireland, strong in revolt, was permitted to do whatever she chose. She armed herself, and not against Great Britain's foes, openly and in a braggart spirit. She published seditious newspapers, and plastered the walls of Dublin with posters insolent to the Empire and loudly favourable to the Empire's foes. When Mr Birrell was questioned about these dangerous matters he replied that the public interest compelled him to silence, and that his attention was closely engaged. Afraid to reprove or to restrain the Sinn Feiners, he thought it prudent to let them follow the path of sedition unhampered. And with a supreme lack of humour he

acknowledged before a court of inquiry that one of the causes of rebellion was the appointment of Sir Edward Carson to the office of Attorney-General! In other words, said he, the British Parliament is blameworthy, if it assents to the choice of a Cabinet Minister unacceptable to a pack of Irish rebels, who are manifestly armed and supported by German gold!

Nowhere in all the records of history will you match this tragi-comedy of Ireland. By the very negation of Government our Ministers permitted Germany to encourage strife in a part of our dominions. There was no secret in the aims and purposes of the Sinn Feiners. With a candid cynicism they held dress rehearsals of the attack which they intended to make upon Dublin and its Castle. And the officials, like rabbits charmed by a snake, did nothing. They do not pretend that they were ignorant of what was in store for them. Only they clung with the energy of despair to the policy, bitterly deplored by Mr Hughes, of *laissez faire*. Mr Redmond, trembling for his leadership, wanted no fuss. He thought he could rule most safely by not calling attention to himself, and Mr Birrell was glad, for the sake of quietness, to permit the ingress of German gold and the influence of German intrigue. Then the expected happened. The rebellion, which all might have foreseen, and which the Ministers might have prevented

had they possessed an ounce of courage, broke out; and the Sinn Feiners are still singing, "Who dares to speak of Easter Week?"

The peril in which the rebellion has involved the Empire cannot be overrated. Nor is the rebellion quelled, as the optimists would have us believe. And what did the British Government do? It capitulated instantly to those who had taken up arms against the State in the very crisis of an overwhelming war. It put the parricide upon the pedestal of the hero. It offered to reward the Sinn Feiners, who had allied themselves with Germany in the face of all men, by the free gift of Home Rule. It saw no absurdity in setting the loyal citizens of Ireland beneath the heel of those who had leagued themselves with our enemies. One by one the high officials had said that they couldn't help it. One by one they had confessed powerlessness and disclaimed responsibility. The Viceroy was a mere figure-head. Mr Birrell, comfortable in London, declined to be pinioned to Dublin. Mr Redmond had a touching belief in the loyalty of his countrymen. What more could they do? Nothing, except to hand over the reins of government to the friends of Germany. Was it not a bold stroke, indeed, in the very moment of disunion, to proclaim aloud the union of all Irish hearts?

Mr Lloyd George, the fond, foolish scapegoat of Mr Asquith's sins, was hastily sum-

moned. He added to the heavy burden upon his back, and once more has achieved nothing. He ran busily hither and thither. He talked—talk comes easy to him—with men of all parties. He told them, with what warrant we know not, that if some sort of agreement in Ireland were not come to at once the conduct of the war would be manifestly impeded. Why should it be impeded? All that we want until after the war is peace and tranquillity in Ireland, and these can be assured by the strict enforcement of martial law. The Government, as usual, refuses to be frank with us. There are dark rumours that America, for the sake of its presidential election, demands an instant settlement, and even threatens reprisals. This is a new method of twisting the lion's tail. But if this rumour be true, we can only say that it is grossly unbecoming in a matter of domestic policy to be swayed by the whims of men engaged some thousands of miles away in the foolish turmoil of an election. Surely we are still masters of our fate. Surely we may still settle our differences without betraying our silly fear of interested neutrals.

However, for an instant it has seemed as though a settlement might come. While Belfast listened to Sir Edward Carson, so much of Dublin as was not subject to the Sinn Feiners suffered the eloquence of Mr Redmond. The worst of it is that the Government, still restrained by cowardice, does not propose the same terms to

both parties. In Belfast the exclusion of the six counties is said to be "definite," while in Dublin it is pronounced merely "temporary." Either side is permitted to believe what it likes, and in the meantime the Nationalists, in full assurance of their power, begin to clamour that there shall be no exclusion at all. That all the old squabble should be revived at a time when we want all our energies for the war is disgraceful enough. In such circumstances an agreement could only be improvised and transitory. But perhaps Messrs Asquith and Lloyd George do not expect to arrive at an agreement. Perhaps they will be content to boast that they tried to bring peace and that they failed.

And then at the critical moment Mr Asquith came into the field with a speech which was nicely calculated to break off all negotiations. He referred at Ladybank to "the deplorable rising in Ireland, the work of a comparatively small body of men," as though he had no responsibility for it, as though he was looking on at it as a mildly interested spectator. Yet such as it is, "the deplorable rising in Ireland" is due to Mr Asquith more than to any other living man. It was he who willed, for the sake of the Irish vote, that the buried controversy about Home Rule should be revived. In 1885 Mr Gladstone, during an interval of lucidity, warned the country what would happen if the Liberal Party should attempt to deal with the con-

stitutional question of the Government of Ireland when it was dependent upon the Irish vote. "I tell you seriously and solemnly," he said, "that although I believe the Liberal Party itself to be honourable, patriotic, and trustworthy,"—a vast assumption truly,—"in such a position as that, it would not be safe for it to enter upon the consideration of the principle of a measure with respect to which at every step in its progress it would be in the power of a party coming from Ireland to say, 'Unless you do this, and unless you do that, we will turn you out to-morrow.'" That is precisely what Mr Redmond's party came from Ireland to tell Mr Asquith; and Mr Asquith, who once professed his agreement with Mr Gladstone's opinion, hastened to surrender. He passed Home Rule, in absolute dependence upon the Irish, and henceforth he cannot shirk the responsibility for bloodshed and revolt.

But, while he esteems all too lightly the part which he has played in the tragedy of Ireland, he still affects to believe that this is the best time for a settlement. And the settlement which he desires is a settlement agreed to neither by Belfast nor by Dublin. He will have nothing to do with the words "definite" or "temporary." What he aims at now is "a provisional settlement." The worst of our Radical politicians is not that they find no point of agreement with their political adversaries—that we neither wish

nor expect—but that they do not agree with one another. Mr Lloyd George is sent forth on a mission to settle without delay the question of Home Rule. Mr Asquith, on the other hand, is content to put off the real settlement until after the war. He wants nothing more just now than something “provisional,” something, we suppose, which will enable him to cry peace, where there is no peace, and to pose before the world as a great conciliator. “When the war comes to an end,” he says, “when the reign of peace is re-established, we shall have to take stock, as an Empire, of our internal relations.” Indeed we shall. Our sole hope lies in Federation. But does Mr Asquith really believe that he will bring about the Federation, which the Nationalists of Ireland have always rejected with every manifestation of contempt, by offering through Mr Lloyd George a “definite” settlement now, and by prating at Ladybank of a measure that is merely “provisional”? If he does not know his own mind, or the mind of his Government, he cannot impart it to Ireland or to the world, and silence would have been better than

the confused babbling of many tongues and the promise of a settlement which can be no settlement at all.

And what of England? Should she take no part in these delicate negotiations? Does Mr Asquith think that Home Rule for Ireland is no more than an Irish controversy? It is not England's fault that Ireland is an island, lying upon her flank, which has always afforded shelter and encouragement to her enemies in time of war. Moreover, Home Rule cannot support itself without the help of base English gold, and it is a sound principle of politics that he who pays should exercise some control over the spending of his money. But England has not disturbed the conduct of the campaign by rebellion, and therefore is not entitled to the sympathy of good Radicals. However, during the war and after it we shall have to live side by side with Irishmen; we shall share their triumphs and their woes; and the voice of England should assuredly be heard before the destinies of all Ireland are handed over, definitely or provisionally, to the declared friends of Germany.

EARL KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM.

It is the paradox of Lord Kitchener's career that, though he had spent but a few brief years in England, he was better known from one end of Great Britain to the other than any other Englishman of his time. He possessed in a high measure the true qualities of an Englishman. He was curt in speech and firm in action. He went about his business always with a clear perception of the end at which he aimed. It was his habit to dominate events, not to wait blindly upon hazard. When he made his famous advance upon Khartoum, for instance, he had planned every detail of march and victory before he set out upon the road. He understood perfectly that battles are not won by will or by accident, that troops must first be trained and railways laid; and he proved how much British zeal and British foresight might accomplish in a country where our armies had too often been left to be the mere sport of chance.

It was, then, the qualities of the gravely practical man that endeared Lord Kitchener to the English people, which saw in him precisely the virtues which it would, if it could, always possess itself. And there is another reason why Lord Kitchener should have won the sympathy of every unit in the unimpassioned democracy. He was

one who took up more space than his fellows. He had that rare faculty of displacement, which only the great ones of the earth may boast. He could not escape notice as he passed from York House to the War Office. His presence in a room was instantly felt. He had not the tricks or the graces of the orator, and yet the plainest statement which he read, sometimes painfully, in the House of Lords, carried with it all the weight which belongs to sincerity of mind and simplicity of purpose. Indeed, the mere fact that he spoke not as a politician but as a soldier vastly enhanced his fame, and we may find a certain consolation in the trust which the people reposed in him. After all, the great prize of life, the confidence of millions of men, is not given only to the professors of a showy rhetoric.

In one other respect Lord Kitchener showed himself an Englishman of the true breed. He depended less upon balanced judgment than upon quick instinct. To discover the course which he ought to follow was with him a process of feeling, not of thought. Where a smaller man would find you a hundred reasons why he should do this or should not do that, Lord Kitchener went straight to the point, as though he had omitted all the steps which generally separate a design from its fulfilment. And he

added to this instinct of action a wide grasp of detail. When he had made up his mind, he could not always explain why he had made 'it up in that particular direction. But he saw instantly all the means which were necessary to fulfil his purpose, and he neglected none of them. In other words, he was swift in resolution, deliberate in action, and upon this happy combination of qualities the success of his career was built.

That he should have won the confidence and affection of all classes, that his death was mourned with a grief which few among the sons of men inspire, were the just reward of a life given wholly to the public service. Ever since he received his commission, in 1871, Kitchener had devoted himself with a whole heart to the welfare of England. The first years of his activity were spent in surveys of Palestine and Cyprus—of great value in themselves and of importance to Kitchener, because they laid the foundation of that familiarity with the East and with Eastern modes of thought which afterwards stood him in good stead. From the year 1882 onwards he played his part gallantly in the drama of Egypt, and began the fight with Mahdism which was finished only at the taking of Khartoum. He crossed swords more than once with Osman Digna; and in 1892, ten years after he had entered the service of the Khedive, he succeeded Sir Francis Grenfell as Sirdar.

In 1896 Kitchener undertook that which perhaps remains his greatest achievement—the conquest of the Sudan. His victories at Dongola, Atbara, and Khartoum have passed into the proud inheritance of our race. And these victories were won not by a series of brilliant dashes into the desert, but by months of sedulous toil and perfect organisation. Here for the first time Kitchener proved his mastery of all the details which further the progress of a campaign. And whatever was done was done by the man himself. He had trained his soldiers, he had arranged his commissariat, he had seen the railway justly and truly laid. The advance upon Omdurman was a triumph of military skill and courage, and the battle which preceded its fall avenged the death of Gordon and made us masters of the Sudan. Nor did Kitchener fail his country when at Fashoda he was confronted by Colonel Marchand and his expedition. He turned lightly from warfare to diplomacy, and by his tact converted what might have been a delicate situation to the advantage of England.

The rewards which his gallantry and prudence had earned and deserved were lavished upon him. He was raised to the peerage, and received with a grant the thanks of Parliament. Better still, he was given an instant opportunity to justify anew the confidence of the country. When Lord Roberts was sent to South Africa, Kitchener accompanied

him as Chief of Staff, and served his Commander-in-Chief with a loyalty and self-suppression which are not always found in one who for years had enjoyed an independent command. Upon Kitchener fell the heavy duty of suppressing the guerilla warfare of the Boers. He pursued his adversaries relentlessly; he swept the country from end to end with military vigilance; he invented the system of blockhouses which at last ensured the victory of the British arms; and he showed his wisdom and clemency when the right moment came by offering terms which were by no means dishonouring to a valiant foe.

Again his sojourn at home was cut short. Scarcely had he set foot in England after the Boer War than he was sent to India as Commander-in-Chief. The work which he did in reorganising the Indian Army, in the building of strategic railways, in making yet more solid the defences of the Indian Empire, is known and appreciated by us all. Seven full years he spent in India, and in 1911 he was appointed British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt. He went thither in troublous times. Sir Eldon Gorst, at the instigation of Sir Edward Grey, had been attempting to introduce the doctrines of Tom Paine into Egypt. It was not his fault that he failed. He was but carrying out the designs of the Government at home, and, as he said himself, of the British People. Now

the Government at home consisted of pedants, who pretended to believe that democracy was a cure for all the evils of mankind; and the British People, which did not know where Egypt was, cannot be accounted a good judge of what was needed for the pacification of a strange, unfamiliar land. Had Sir Eldon Gorst been wisely guided, he would have resigned rather than attempt to force representative institutions upon a country, of whose 11,000,000 inhabitants only 600,000 could read and write. His was the mortification of seeing disorder and discontent overwhelm the people which it was his duty to govern. And when Lord Kitchener succeeded him there was work to do which only a strong man could accomplish successfully. After two years of resolute government, Lord Kitchener had the satisfaction of restoring to Egypt law, order, and prosperity, and of bettering vastly the lot of the Fellaheen.

In 1914, by a fortunate accident, for which we shall ever be grateful, Lord Kitchener was in England. There was an imminent danger at the outset of the war that Lord Haldane should return to the War Office, and that England should be satisfied with exerting her supremacy at sea. The country clamoured for Lord Kitchener, who, already on his way to Egypt, was hastily recalled. Then began his reign at the War Office, which turned England into a military nation and enabled us

to throw large armies into the field. The difficulties which lay in Lord Kitchener's way would have daunted a less intrepid spirit. An office arranged to administer a small army had to be transformed to an organisation capable of equipping, training, and supplying millions of men. And a yet greater obstacle was thrown in Lord Kitchener's path. He knew little of England, and nothing whatever of English politicians. He had spent all the working years of his life in the East, where a man may do his duty without measuring the pressure of this or that colleague, without being asked to oppose the intrigues of men who should have given him willingly all the aid that he asked. Hard as the task was, Lord Kitchener faced it with equanimity and success. He baffled the politicians. He enrolled his armies at home, and he stood abroad for the symbol of British courage and British resolution. All that we owe to him we shall know only when in the fulness of time the history of the war is written. Meanwhile we may gratefully acknowledge two immense ser-

vices, among many others, which he did to England. At the time when foolish optimists were loudly declaring that a victorious peace would come within a few months, he deliberately and firmly prepared for a long fight. "Three years or the duration of the war" — the phrase was heard on all sides, and was a public guarantee that Lord Kitchener at least did not underrate the heavy work that lay ahead of us. And then the magic of his name attracted thousands to the colours. He achieved what might have seemed impossible. He raised an army of millions where no army was, and he inspired the British nation with the valour to fight, and the hopeful assurance that victory would be theirs. This Lord Kitchener did, and none other than Lord Kitchener could have done it. It was a favourite saying of his that "the work matters, not the workman." And with this thought in his mind he died, we are sure, serene and contented. The workman had done his work, and the work will endure, even though the tireless soul that did it lies fathoms deep in the North Sea.

THE PROTEST OF AN IRISH LOYALIST.

I AM well aware that English people are thoroughly tired of hearing about Ireland. It is one of the subjects that can be talked over and over, backwards and forwards, round and round, and no one grows more enlightened; but some one is sure to be angry before any conversation on Ireland can be brought to an end. Nevertheless Ireland must occupy our attention again, for the simple reason that there has been a Rebellion here. To put it more accurately, there *is* Rebellion. It is alive, and looking out of the people's eyes and smouldering in their hearts; it is everywhere except on their lips, but silence and black looks are more eloquent than words.

I have just been through Ireland, from east to west, and then again southwards. It seems to me that we have gone back a hundred years and more. We are breathing the atmosphere of 1798. Old hatreds, envies, and fanaticism, that some thought dead and buried, have risen from their graves and confront us.

One little scene that I witnessed in Dublin was very significant. It occurred at the corner of Stephen's Green, close by the Memorial Arch to the Dublin Fusiliers who fell in South Africa. On the Arch were fresh bullet-marks from the fighting of three weeks before. In their own Dublin the Fusiliers would have met with no mercy from the Sinn Feiners,

who shot down every unarmed soldier they could surprise in the streets on that Black Monday of April 2. Three weeks had passed. A soldier's funeral went down the street. Some few of his comrades, only very few, followed the silent form covered by the Union Jack. In Ireland no decent man allows a funeral to pass without uncovering. But this was a soldier. Therefore—— Well, it was a sad sight to see in the capital of one's own country. Two women were standing quietly near the Arch, both sisters of soldiers. Without a spoken word their eyes rested reverently on the Union Jack. But a certain priest came by that way. He was not of the commonest type; not that product of Maynooth that we know so well, with the black, coarse jaws, the strut, and the dirty pocket-handkerchief. This priest was active, rather tall and grey-haired, with the thin, close-lipped, hard face of a fanatic; and with all the hatred of a fanatic looking out of his half-closed eyes, he scowled at the two silent women, who calmly disregarded him. After he had passed, with his head over his shoulder,—much as a malignant priest might leave the stage,—one of them said to the other—
“That look was a threat.”

It is extraordinary what a difference one week of open rebellion can make over the face of a whole country; how

confidence is at an end, how every one watches and listens, and mistrusts his neighbour; how the ordinary, easy relations between employers and employed become tight and strained.

In Dublin they have a certain way of accepting the most serious wrong-doing *after a little time* with slipshod good-nature; half deploring it, half excusing it, with a story and a laugh and a wary eye on the listener to note the exact effect and draw conclusions. There is something exasperating about Dubliners. They are excited over trifles and impatient of realities, clever in talk, flippant in feeling. They have had nine years of indolent, weak, dishonest Government; and they no longer believe that England has any honest intention of governing Ireland at all. In fact, nobody in Ireland believes it; but it must be remembered that the seat of Government is in Dublin, and naturally those who are nearest have opportunities of observation. What they see has made them sceptics.

It has been often said that a bad form of Government administered in good faith and uprightness is capable of conferring substantial benefits on a country. No one claims that the form of Government in Ireland approaches the ideal, or is even of a specially admirable kind. But it is quite untrue to say, as Mr Asquith now tries to maintain, that it has "completely broken down." The Ministers that he sent to

Ireland have completely broken down. When Mr Balfour was Chief Secretary in the old bad days of the Land League, after a campaign of outrage had been started in the country and every evil passion was at its height, he maintained the law, he calmed the violence, he restored the social order. His was a far harder task than has fallen to any Chief Secretary since; but in later years Mr Walter Long upheld the same good traditions with the same excellent result. They were both very popular in the country, and thoroughly respected by their opponents. Why? They did their duty and kept order. Mr Birrell has been liked by no one and respected nowhere. Why? Because he respected neither himself nor his office. He avoided trouble, avoided decisions, avoided his subordinates, avoided the country altogether whenever he could possibly do so. The only thing in connection with his office which he thoroughly appreciated was its salary, and here he was a faithful copy of his chief. One steady principle can be discovered, and only one, actuating the public conduct of these two elderly gentlemen. It is the principle which governed the Vicar of Bray.

Mr Birrell is not to be blamed for not liking Ireland: these feelings are generally mutual. He is only to be blamed for nominally remaining there. It was his engaging habit to proclaim that his one ambition was to be the

last Irish Chief Secretary. This was candidly letting the cat out of the bag. It is no secret that Lord Aberdeen and Mr Birrell were sent to Ireland not with the object of governing it, but with the object of bringing the British Government here into such discredit and discomfiture that at the chosen moment our conscientious Prime Minister might declare he had no alternative but to hand his responsibility over to the Home Rulers, and send the whole island straight to the devil.

The Ministers were well chosen. They consistently fostered disloyalty and sedition until they hastened the Great War by making the Kaiser believe that Ireland was ready to break into flames. She was just *not* quite ready; there he made a mistake. Also the Irish regiments were loyal; there he had another surprise.

Meantime it is important to ask how much the ordinary Englishman understands about the present condition of things in Ireland?

Not very much, and he wishes it was less. But at least he understands that the House of Commons would be a more comfortable place of business if the Irish members were out of it, and since they are always clamouring for Home Rule he is inclined to say, "Let them take it and go." That sounds like elementary common-sense.

But like most easy political doctrine, it is misleading. The Nationalist members do not

represent Ireland, or even a full half of Ireland. Their country is divided against them at home, and re-divided against itself. The Englishman does not wish to fathom these differences and dissensions. He is sick of them, and his heart is in the Great War. Nevertheless I will ask his attention to one short, true story. It is so very old that it is almost sure to be new to him.

An Irish sailor was shipwrecked upon some far-off, unknown shore, and as he emerged dripping from the waves and scrambled up the beach, he demanded with his first breath—

"What is the Government of this Island?—*for I'm agin it.*"

There you have the whole case in a nut-shell, and the moral need not be laboured. No wonder it is a little difficult for the Englishman, whose first instinct is for law and order, to realise another kind of being whose first instinct is disobedience to law, to any law, to whichever law happens to be over him, in fact. If it is British law, then it is something "alien"; we all remember the old cant. It hurts his high spirit unbearably, according to the politicians at Westminster, though we who live under it at home have not noticed anybody hurt. Then comes the cry for Home Rule; and while the politicians exploit these "national aspirations," and pretend that Ireland under Home Rule would be the most contented, peaceful

spot on earth, their constituents here are laying out the battle-ground, and strenuously preparing for the fray. Formerly it was Ulster and the other loyalists who were said to be obstructing Ireland's chance of salvation; but now the Home Rulers themselves have split into factions,—as Irish parties invariably do,—and the Sinn Feiners, who are Syndicalists and pro-Germans, hate the Redmondites more bitterly than they hate Orangemen, if possible. Their feelings are fully reciprocated.

But in the face of these things Mr Asquith has the effrontery to pretend that Mr Redmond can speak for all Ireland,—simply because he has made a deal with Mr Redmond, who commands more votes in the present Parliament than any other Irish party leader. Mr Redmond of course plays up to his astute customer, and poses as a constitutional leader and a person of unblemished loyalty. In England they have short memories; Mr Redmond's past has little interest for them, and they are favourably impressed by his encouraging recruiting for the new Armies. We in Ireland know that it was Mr Redmond's advice which prevented the Registration Act being applied to Ireland, and that he lost far more recruits for the Army than he ever gained, by his false declaration that it would be highly dangerous to attempt any form of compulsion over here.

“Do not *divide* the country!

Compulsion would be fatal,” was his cry, knowing full well that Ireland is divided now, has always been divided, and always will be divided. Mr Asquith, who at the very moment is plotting to set up two separate Governments in the island, pretends to believe Mr Redmond, refuses to listen to any one else, and cuts off the best chance the Irishman ever had of growing into a loyal, whole-hearted man, and serving the country that he really loves.

If Ireland had been given exactly the same treatment as England she would have responded to it, and there would have been no Sinn Fein rebellion. Every one knows that soldiering is the Irishman's vocation. That is why he submits to military discipline when he rejects all other, and under it he becomes first a soldier and secondly a loyal subject of the King. But while he lives still at home in a disloyal community, a young raw lad, reading nothing but some seditious weekly rag, and listening to the public-house politicians on a Saturday evening, it requires a considerable moral effort to go directly against the feelings of all his world, and to enlist. It is a small world, but so powerful in its smallness. A young man of whom I heard lately, pining to be a soldier but fearing the indignation at home, enlisted secretly and went away, telling them that he was going to look for better-paid work in England. His next letter from England informed them that

he had found the work and "liked it well." In his third letter, after some months had gone by, he broke the truth to them. They survived; and no doubt that soldier son and his career will put the whole family gradually into new relations towards the Army, the Empire, and all that is therein.

Meantime in Ireland the Germans are at work, and have got good value for their money. Hand in hand with the Sinn Feiners, their worthy allies, who were all ready waiting for them, they combined every element of mischief in the country, scattered money and arms and promises of help to the disaffected everywhere, and eventually raised a Rebellion. Of what happened in Ireland during this Rebellion the people in England know next to nothing. Of the lives lost, the hopes destroyed, and the cruel treacheries perpetrated, they have been deliberately kept in ignorance. The censorship was set up in Ireland without a day's delay, and kept as much as could possibly be kept out of the newspapers. The House of Commons was absolutely debarred from discussion of the origin, the course, or the remedy for the Rebellion. Mr Asquith put on a face as solemn as if he really cared, and announced that it would not be for the public benefit to give any information about Ireland. It certainly would not have been for *his* benefit; therefore no information was given. Mr

Birrell paid his last flying visit to Dublin, cast a glance on the ruins of Sackville Street and other places; on the dead bodies of policemen, soldiers, and rebels. The rattle of the machine-guns and the rifles of the snipers who were still hiding behind chimney-stacks and taking the precious lives of our soldiers, were altogether too much for his nerves. It is believed that a few plain words were spoken to him on this occasion in Dublin. He fled quickly back to Westminster, and there made the inevitable apology for his "mistakes."

The House was more than indulgent. His colleagues seemed to say that he was taking the matter quite too much to heart. Of course a great many people had been killed, and an incalculable amount of damage done, both moral and material. There was no denying that Rebellion was afoot. But after all it was only in Ireland; and as Mr Birrell and the Cabinet he belonged to, and the Chief who was at the head of the Cabinet, were all involved in these egregious "mistakes," obviously the only thing to do was to forgive each other all round, and make it clear that no true patriot ought to say a word more on the subject.

But what about ourselves? We understand Mr Asquith's position thoroughly; but as we live in Ireland, and have no intention of holding our lives and liberties at the mercy of Sinn Feiners or Germans, it seems to us high

time that our own position was made a little clearer.

Has any English person found time to read the evidence given before the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Irish Rebellion? To any one who has done so it must be perfectly plain that the Sinn Feiners were from the beginning made thoroughly well aware that they had nothing to fear from the Irish Executive. This is indeed an under-statement of the case. They were almost openly protected. Their meetings, and drillings, and threats of rebellion were all known and reported from every part of Ireland. But no steps were ever taken to deal with them. The Police were powerless to act, because they were always paralysed "from above." Since the day, now nine years ago, that the Arms Act was allowed to lapse, every official responsible for order in Ireland, from Sir Neville Chamberlain, head of the R.I.C., down to the last Sergeant of Police in his lonely country barracks, has protested against the reckless folly of allowing arms to be in the hands of rogues and rebels; but the protests of high and low have been in vain. They have never been answered, merely ignored. When the Great War began in 1914, common prudence would surely have suggested some measures to prevent the co-operation of the King's enemies abroad with the King's enemies at home. None were taken. That is indeed a mild way of describing the course pur-

sued. The King's enemies in Ireland were ostentatiously proclaimed harmless, even while they were cheering at the Kaiser's victories and assisting his submarines with signals and supplies.

"England's danger is Ireland's opportunity."

Their old, low-minded maxim was proclaimed and acted upon, while the King's Ministers in Ireland pretended to know nothing amiss. It is very important that nothing should be exaggerated here. I refer to those facts only which are substantiated in the evidence before the Commission, taken less than a month ago. It was described in a leading British Review as "strange and humiliating evidence indeed"; but one cannot know how quickly Irish affairs have already faded out of memory. The evidence proved that every warning of impending insurrection was given by the police, by the Deputy-Lieutenants of counties, by the Officer in Chief Command of the troops in Ireland, and every warning was disregarded. It was vain to represent that the Sinn Feiners were thwarting recruiting in every way. The Act for the Defence of the Realm was practically a dead letter in Ireland. It was vain to point out the places where arms had been secreted, or to devise the seizing of seditious centres, or the prevention of Sinn Fein anti-recruiting meetings. The police were perfectly capable of doing all these things, and knew the necessity for doing them; but they could not act without

authority, and the authority invariably decreed that nothing should be done. The head of the Dublin police is subject to the Under-Secretary, and he in turn of course to the Chief Secretary. So the position was this—Mr Birrell, having received orders from *his* Chief to let nothing transpire about danger or disloyalty in Ireland, carried out his instructions by calmly denying the most obvious facts, and, when they were forced upon his notice, remarking, "Never mind! I only smile at these things."¹ One instance of this line of conduct will be enough. Major Price, of the Intelligence Department, brought to his notice a letter sent to America from members of the National University, which actually discussed an armed rising. Mr Birrell wrote, "The whole letter is rubbish!" and refused any attention. The same formula served him when his attention was called to the drillings and armed parades of Sinn Fein "troops" in the Dublin streets and parks, and their insolent sham attacks on the public buildings which they intended later to attack in earnest.

"All rubbish!" said the Chief Secretary. "Why not let them have their little games?"

So they had them.

In this way the country was brought to the crowning disaster of Easter Monday; and then the House of Commons lamented that the Government

could have been so "taken by surprise," and had "this terrible bolt from the blue" launched at them.

The Commissioners naturally inquired on whose advice Irish Ministers were relying when they refused to act on the reports of their own responsible subordinates? On Mr Redmond's, was the invariable reply.

Did Mr Redmond then deny the increasing numbers and the violent hostility of the Sinn Feiners? No! he admitted both, but he always advised taking no notice of them.

Did Mr Dillon agree with Mr Redmond about the Sinn Feiners?

No. He considered they were dangerous; *but he always advised taking no notice of them.*

So, at the dictation of these two intelligent patriots, the policy of the ostrich was substituted for law and order; and when the inevitable result came in rebellion and bloodshed, the Prime Minister called it "the breaking down of the English Government in Ireland." Why, there had been no Government! That was the root of the mischief. We could perfectly well have kept order in Ireland but for the disloyalty and dishonesty of our mercenary rulers. How well they know it! After pretending that there was absolutely nothing wrong while the German service rifles were being distributed through the country and the German am-

¹ His own report of his words.

munition stored in the General Post Office of Dublin, they have now made a right-about face, and pretend that Ireland is in such a desperate condition that the smallest discussion of her affairs must be prohibited. First we were beneath notice. Now we are too dangerous to be mentioned freely. And in spite of our bearing such a character in their eyes, *this* is the moment that they choose to present us with a testimonial to good conduct in the shape of a second-hand Home Rule Bill!

Mr Asquith may feel some natural satisfaction in thus placing himself on the exact level of Herr Bethmann-Hollweg; nay, he has descended beneath him. The "scrap of paper" which the German disregarded so scornfully was a treaty with foreign Powers, but Mr Asquith's pledge that

"Home Rule shall be no further proceeded with till after the end of the war"

was given to his fellow-subjects, to the loyal men of Ulster and throughout Ireland, who, relying on that solemn pledge, left all that was dear to them for duty's sake. On that pledge how many have already given their lives! Truly

"The good die first,
And they whose hearts are dry as
summer dust
Burn to the socket. . . ."

How naturally brave men believe in the honour of others! and oh, how easy for politicians to deceive them! There

is a taint in the air of Westminster. After men have sat long enough on those green benches, listening to the snobs and place-men and political *parvenus* who now rule over us, they seem to surrender their sense of morality. They feel no sacredness in a pledge. Everything must give way to the "exigencies of the situation," as their phrase is. But this is to lose faith in God. How have we sunk so low? Are we to become like the Germans, who have denied Him and set up their false twin deities of force and fraud in His place?

It is most certain that to break pledges is the first sign of a man's or a nation's degeneracy, and the next step is to turn coward and refuse to face the consequences of one's own actions. The consequences in Ireland have been rebellion. These must be faced with resolute rule, with even-handed justice, with honest administration of the law as it stands. There must be no more tampering with truth, no more protection of felons and traitors, no more withdrawal of "political offences" from the light of day. If we are to have a new Constitution, let it be given us at the end of the war, as it was promised, and by the Houses of Parliament with the King's consent.

Mr Asquith seems to think that he has only to send over his own political handyman to spend a week in Ireland and patch up whatever is wrong with the first idea that comes into his head. Mr Lloyd

George knows as much about the conditions of life in Ireland as he knows about the habits of pheasants. But he has a plausible tongue and an incurable confidence in rash expedients. He has called for a Convention, and a compromise, and a general discussion of every subject that can possibly inflame men's minds to the utmost at the very moment when quiet, good order, and strict refraining from controversy are the only hope for the country. What do we want with a new "provisional settlement"—the very terms are incompatible—only to set every one by the ears while the war lasts, and then to be overturned like a house of cards? All that we want is what Englishmen demand for themselves everywhere—order in the land and men of common honesty in office. Why should we not have them? At this moment the disloyal throughout Ireland are hailing the promise of a speedy grant of Home Rule as a victory for the Rebels, and so of course it is. We, the loyal minority, have to thank the unanimous British Cabinet for our humiliation.

The Rebels were not out for Home Rule. They proclaimed an Irish Republic, and no doubt with such help and encouragement as they are now receiving they will soon proclaim it again. But meantime Home Rule is a step on the way, and it is actually being forced upon them, not by any party here, but by England. No one dreamt of it in Ireland at this

time; the wildest Nationalist would not have asked for it. When the first silence fell after the awful firing in the streets of Dublin, all had the same thought, that at least Home Rule must be postponed till a safer time. Some thought it with regret, some with relief, but none doubted that it was a set-back for years to come of any constitutional change. Mr Asquith, on the contrary, called it a "golden opportunity." Although he thinks that the slightest change in the Government of England, such as a General Election, would imperil the Empire, in Ireland he holds that a rebellion must be followed by a revolution, and the sooner the better. He plunges us into it with such cynical and irresponsible haste that the most important terms of Mr Lloyd George's proposals are being interpreted in one sense by Sir Edward Carson to his followers in the North, and in precisely the opposite sense by Mr Redmond to his masters in Dublin. Each says that he has Mr Asquith's authority, and we are tempted to think that each is right. Apparently Sir Edward Carson has been told that the exclusion of the six Ulster counties is to be *permanent*; Mr Redmond, on the other hand, that the exclusion of the Ulster counties is *definite*—that is, only till the end of the war, perhaps a little longer, perhaps not. Mr Asquith is not a very definite person, though with every desire to be permanent.

Such is the position at this moment of writing; and no

doubt before these lines see the light endless further complications will have arisen, and great events abroad and at home will have withdrawn the minds of Englishmen still further from any thought of Ireland and the Loyalists here whom they have deliberately left to their fate.

When they think of us again it will be because the Kaiser has taken possession of the excellent naval base obligingly

left for his use in this island so full of his friends. But it is the English, not the Irish, who are making him a present of it.

The dark eleventh hour
Draws on and sees us sold
To every evil power
We fought against of old.
Rebellion, rapine, hate,
Oppression, wrong, and greed
Are loosed to rule our fate
By England's act and deed.

A SOUTHERN LOYALIST.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

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"OUT OF IT."

THE Major sat in the sun-smitten African fort that guarded the mountain pass, and reflected. He reflected upon many things, but mostly upon his own colossal bad luck in volunteering for guerilla warfare in the Colonial Protectorate of Baz-Hinterland, three months before war broke out at home, when his own regiment had sailed across the Channel to France—and to Mons. Repeated applications to be permitted to rejoin the shattered remnants of his battalion merely evoked polite assurances that he was indispensable where he was, and that he must remain in command of the Baz-Hinterland Irregular Tribal Horse. Further and more insistent applications on his part were met by an official snub, and the information that his attitude, if persisted in, would be regarded in the light of a spirit of insubordination.

He sat pondering gloomily

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over all these things, and wondering if any of his brother officers would be alive after the war. The Commanding Officer was dead, and so was the Adjutant; Harleck and Palfrey were gone too. Jones, Smith, and Robinson had died of wounds, little Basil had lost both legs, Maxwell was blind, and Humphrey—old Jacky Humphrey with his absurd eye-glass and idiotic drawl—had been bayoneted by the Prussians after being wounded by a shell. The other battalions had fared as badly—the whole regiment had been in the thick of it for the first month—and here was he eating his soul out among these "black apes" (to quote his own description of his men), when all that he had ever lived for, hoped for, and had been ready to die for, all his professional life, was happening in Europe like a far-off gruesome melodrama, seen, as it were, through the wrong end of a pair of

L

opera - glasses. Damn! The curt phrase crystallised his whole immediate outlook upon life. He glanced irritably across the single dwelling-room that the little fort contained, and which he shared with the Subaltern. The latter lay sprawling ungracefully across a crazy deck - chair, snoring placidly at the hot tin roof. The Major hated and loathed him as he lay there. He hated his startling new tan riding-boots (the Major was a Rifleman, and wore more sober black leather accoutrements), he hated his round, red, boyish face, and idiotically opened and snoring mouth. In fact he hated him from head to heel with the aimless, purposeless, unreasonable hatred that you can only know if you have lived for months, devoid of all privacy, with a fellow white man in the heart of Africa. Than this there is no greater hatred. Further, as the Major knew full well, the Subaltern abominated him in return.

The heat outside the loop-holed walls shimmered itself out into the coolness of evening, and the Tribal Horsemen began to groom their ponies. Some depressed and long-haired Panjabi sepoys, who also formed part of the Out-post, rose from the ground in the twilight, like dishevelled bats, and began to comb their greasy locks as a camp-follower lit a spluttering wood fire against their evening meal.

The Subaltern of Indian

Infantry (for such he was) at length awoke, galvanised back to conscious existence by an apparently intoxicated blue-bottle. He turned over in the creaking chair with a pettish movement, still drugged with sleep.

"Curse you, Moriarty," he exclaimed peevishly to the indignant Major, "why the devil did you wake me up? I trekked forty miles last night with my *P.M.'s*¹ on that rotten stunt you sent me on."

"Who's waking you up?" replied the Major amiably. "D'you think I care twopence whether you're awake or not? For all the work you do here with your knock-kneed Hindis you might be a blasted Sleeping Beauty and I'd never notice it!"

"Tryin' to be offensive?" suggested the Subaltern politely. "If so, let me tell you straight away that I'm pretty well fed up with all your *blanked* Rifle Brigade swank; and as for your undisciplined black African apes, I'd rather command naked chimpanzees straight away—they're cleaner. You're always buckin' about your regiment, and France, and being out of it all. Why not *go* there and give the Tribal Horse a chance of gettin' taught something?"

Under any other circumstances and in any other less God - forsaken country, or again, if untried by malaria, nerves, and the generally abnormal conditions that reign

¹ Panjabi-Mohomedans.

in this particularly devil-ridden part of Africa, both soldiers, who were Regulars, would have been mutually scandalised. Here it was noticeable that neither gave a thought to the disciplinary aspect of the situation, and the Major would no more have thought of putting the Subaltern under arrest for insubordinate language than he would have thought of forging a cheque. In fact, there was a sort of unwritten law between them—a sort of Alice-through-the-looking-glass code of honour—that forgave and forgot all official aspects of such *contretemps*, which latterly had become more frequent, out of mutual appreciation of the nightmare environment that gave rise to them.

They bathed nakedly in each other's presence; and having consumed whisky pegs mixed with opaque and tepid water, they felt more at peace with the world, and went for a stroll together outside the barbed-wire zariba.

"By the way," said the Major, "about that trek I sent you on the day before yesterday, it's all very well your saying that our friendly tribes are quiet and no Dervishes about, but I mistrust this quietness. The Dervishes near the Shawd country have a mighty clever leader. He's a *religieux* of sorts, too; kind of understudy of the Somaliland Mad Mullah. My spies told me he contemplated a raid on the Dag friendlies, and that's why I sent you. I acted prematurely, as it

now appears; but I bet he'll be on to it pretty soon, and so I've just been thinking this afternoon how we can best sell him a pup. I'm pretty well sure that he's lying *doggo* at Karim just at present. There's water there this time of year; but if he wants to attack the Dag friendlies, he's plumb certain to trek against them *vid* the Simber-Ber wells, though it isn't the shortest route; because otherwise if he went direct for them he'd have to do a 250 mile march straight off in a waterless country. If you look at your map you'll see that his present headquarters and the Simber-Ber wells and the Dag country all make a triangle. It is roughly 100 miles from where he is now to Simber-Ber; and though there's no water on the way, he'd do it in two days if he wanted to, *carrying* water. He'd then renew his water *bandobast* at the wells, using them as a 'half-way house,' and, after breaking his journey there, streak down on our people at Dag. I've always wanted to have a permanent post at Simber-Ber, sitting on the water, for this very reason, and then he couldn't very well get at the Dags; but as you know, Simber-Ber is outside our area of 'protective influence,' so my idea couldn't be sanctioned. Still, in a special case like this, when we pretty well know what he's up to, I think I'm justified in sending a temporary post there. You see, if we could only time our arrival

there properly, there's some chance of his not getting the news of our presence before he's nearly there himself coming from the opposite direction. That being the case, he'll probably put up a fight, for two reasons: one being that his push will already be short of water and not keen on a two days' waterless march back to their happy homes; and further, they'll have their tails up with the hope of loot at the end of the whole journey. If we have real luck, and if none of his spies spot us moving at night, we might actually ambush and *dirty-trick* him as he comes up to the wells. Anyhow, we'd be more likely to safeguard the Dags by going there than by sitting here twenty miles behind 'em in this dam foolish fort. What do you think of my plan? If he can't turn us out of Simber-Ber, he won't get any water, and so he can't ignore us and push on past us towards the Dags. I think I shall push off to-night as soon as the moon's up, because the latest reports say he's starting next Friday, as it's an 'auspicious day.' I'll reach Dag to-morrow morning about dawn, and after watering and grazing the ponies push off again at midday towards Simber-Ber. I ought to arrive there Friday night or early Saturday morning, and if he starts from Karim on Friday he can't be there before Saturday evening."

"What makes you so bally certain about his starting next Friday in particular?" asked the Subaltern.

"I'm not certain, but everything points to it, and one must take a certain number of chances in a show like this. Three spies of mine, arriving at different times and by different routes, gave me the same yarn: one was an outcast Dervish woman, the other two men of the Dag tribe.

"Right-o," replied the Subaltern coolly. "When do you want my blokes to push off?"

"Oh, I shan't need your Hindis," said the Major. "They'd want about half a ton of rations and a whole reservoir of water, to say nothing of transport. This is no stunt for Regular troops; we're not at Aldershot or Quetta. I shall just give my black apes an armful of dried dates apiece, and that'll last 'em a fortnight with what they'll pick up themselves in the Bush. Besides, your chaps are wanted to garrison the fort."

"The wily Panjabi can't compete with the Tribal Horse when it comes to rations, I admit," said the Subaltern. "No one could, unless he were a shrivelled black mummy and lived on sand and sawdust; but, as you know, I've got 'em used to doing on half the Paternal Government ration, and I don't go in for *ma bap-ing*¹ 'em, like old Carruthers used to, and so they've come on a lot. If I left 50 in the

¹ *Ma bap-ing*, Sepoy phrase, literally father and mothering. In this case dealing too gently.

fort with the machine-guns, it would leave me 112 efficients to follow you up. You may need us before you've done! I can easily make a water and ration *bandobast* with 40 commandeered donkeys and some old kerosene oil tins. I shan't be a drag on your mobility, because there's no need for us to move together."

"Yes, and let you and your hundred Hindis lose your way in the Bush and die of thirst! I can't spare you any Tribal Horse to guide you."

"That doesn't matter; I could get some Dag spearmen as guides."

"Sorry, but there's nothing doing; you'll have to stay behind."

They returned to the fort and to their noisome dinner of tinned foodstuffs, and argued the point till midnight. The Major, however, was obdurate, and rose to depart on the rising of the moon.

"Anyhow, even if my Panjabis can't trek about on their flat feet as fast as your bally mounted scallywags, they don't bolt when they *do* arrive," was the Subaltern's last Parthian shot.

Three days passed, after leaving Dag, before the Major's sweating pony column came in sight of Simber-Ber in the dawn of Saturday morning. The Bush in front was thin and scrubby and the countryside open, while Simber-Ber itself, two miles away, was marked by a Gibraltar-like rock that stood out of the plain like some grim sentinel

of the gods. He dismounted his force and formed up in square, and while the rather tucked-up ponies began to nibble the coarse dewy grass with hungry eagerness, their wiry black riders proceeded to munch a handful of dates, and to swallow a mouthful of water from the large, but now nearly exhausted, canvas *chagals* that hung upon their saddles. So far Fate had not been too kind to the expedition, for the official *route* book was sadly out of date, and two out of the three water holes mentioned in it were now mere dried-up dustbins, full of encroaching sand. In fact, the column had not seen water for the last eighty miles. However, all would be well presently, because the water supply at Simber-Ber, just ahead, never gave out in summer or in winter, as it was constantly fed by a subterranean spring in the hillside. Meanwhile it was necessary to send out scouts to reconnoitre, lest a few stray Dervishes should be hanging about the gorge, and also to arrange with the headmen of any friendly tribes that might be grazing their cattle in the vicinity, to let him have immediate information of the approach—or rumoured approach—of the enemy's raiding party.

After sending out a reliable native sergeant with a pony section, he followed his men's example and despatched some milk chocolate and drank what little water remained in his own *chagal* before relighting his morning pipe. The scouts

dashed out in a galloping fan formation, and rode rapidly towards the wide gorge that clove the hill in twain, and which contained the precious water that meant life or death for the winner or loser in the race for it. However, as he had won, he could now afford to smile at his past anxiety, and await the coming of the disappointed and thirsty enemy with pleasant anticipation. His only fear was that they would have got news of his own movements, and have postponed their raid in consequence. It was a toss up either way. The pony section was now close to the black mouth of the gorge, two miles away, but in the clear African sunlight their activities were plainly visible. Suddenly they halted, and their leader rode slowly forward. A second later he swung his pony round on its haunches, and with raised warning arm came galloping back hell for leather. The other scouts followed his example and came tearing back like so many ebony Tod Sloans. A rifle *banged* rudely from the gorge—the Dervish uses an honest .450, and these do not crack daintily like your pretty '303's—and a pony fell. A hundred rifles took up the tale from all over the hillside, but although their heavy soft lead bullets kept knocking up the sand behind, in front of, and among the retreating scouts, no more casualties occurred, and they reached the main body in safety.

"Oh, Hades!" groaned the disappointed Major, "that old

swine of a Mullah has got there first after all! By Jove, I'll shoot those three ruddy spies when I return!" To the native sergeant he added, "Are they in force?"

"Yes, Sirkal," answered the Baz-Hinterlandi cheerfully; "it's Ibrahim the Red Mullah's standard, and he wouldn't be raiding with less than 2000 men. I saw at least 300 of their ponies, Sirkal, being led up from the water, so there are Dervish horsemen as well as footmen."

"How many of them will have rifles, do you suppose?" asked the Major. The Baz-Hinterlandi shrugged his shoulders. "Allah knows," he remarked helpfully; "perhaps eight hundred, and the rest will be spearmen."

It is seldom possible to settle a difference of opinion with the Dervish of Baz-Hinterland without coming to close quarters with him; and a sort of black animated thunderbolt that rushes through the scrub discharging spear after spear with the rapidity of a Chicago sausage machine, is apt to be more unpleasant than his brother with a heavy-bore rifle; particularly if you allow yourself to be out-maneuvred from the open plain into the Bush country, which deprives you of any advantage that the superiority of your magazine Lee-Enfield might otherwise give you. The Major scratched his head and thought,—hard. He had 450 Irregular Tribal Horse with him. They were all armed with the latest short Lee-

Enfield rifle, but on the other hand their training and discipline were sketchy (to put it mildly), and further, they were tired and thirsty. Some of them had fired a musketry course, some of them hadn't; few had more than four months' service, and all were by nature of an excitable racial temperament. Finally, he was outnumbered by four to one. It was one thing to ambush the enemy—as he had intended—from behind a naturally strong position, or even to bar their advance in the open, and make *them* attack *him*; but for 450 men to attack 2000 in the self-same strong defensive position was by no means a proposition that could be entertained without serious reflection, particularly when his inferiority in numbers was by no means counterbalanced by any real superiority in training, discipline, or *morale*. On the other hand, not to attack was not only to lose prestige, but it also meant another forty hours' waterless march back to the wells they had last vacated, and already his ponies were distressed by thirst and by the general bucketing of a forced march. In fact, as he reflected grimly, the Red Mullah had hoist him with his own petard, and the situation was distinctly unhealthy. He knew the character of his Irregulars, and it was a complex character. The Baz-Hinterlandi will fight like a lion when he wants to, and will melt away into the Bush like a morning mist if he

doesn't. He will fight—and then no man is braver—for loot, for cattle, for women, and for—water. Here a successful attack meant Dervish ponies, Dervish rifles, and the possession of the priceless spring. Yes, it was obviously an occasion when he could trust them to put their hearts into it; what he mistrusted was their own undisciplined impetuosity, which might ruin everything. He wished he had another white man with him, for if he himself went down everything would probably become chaos. But poor Macartney of the 40th Hussars had died of fever a month ago, and Wilson had been killed; officers were already on their way from home to replace them, but neither had yet arrived. He blew his whistle and the men fell in.

"O Baz-Hinterlandis," he said cheerfully, "here is death in front and death behind; still, some of us will live if God forgets about us. We will now attack the Red Mullah and will kill him too. He has plenty of ponies and plenty of rifles, so see to it that you get rich this day. Would ye drink? Are ye thirsty? Over there is the water, and it is cool and plentiful. Come, O sons of Satan."

The men grinned broadly,—for the greatest charm of the Baz-Hinterlandi is his sense of humour,—and swung themselves into their saddles with their accustomed cheerfulness.

"O Sirkal," said the senior native Colour-Sergeant (at least he was *called* "Colour-

Sergeant" for the sake of argument), "this is well. If we kill the Red Mullah, his people will fly, and we shall push on to Karim and rape his All. Also, by the grace of Allah, no Hindis are with us with whom to divide the spoil there."

"Half a minute," said the Major brusquely. "Am I running this show, or are you? We'll talk of Karim after,—this morning."

Since orthodox drill was not to the liking of the Baz-Hinterland Horse, their Major always adopted the principle of "follow my leader" when manœuvring his command across country. Riding at a collected canter towards Simber-Ber, he suddenly altered his course two points to the south-west, and made for a *donga* in which he proposed to hide his ponies during his dismounted attack upon the gorge. He arrived there, leaping his stocky little pony over the undergrowth, while the Irregular Horse swept behind him like a wave. The men jumped nimbly from their ponies and rapidly hobbled them with their picketing gear, and then formed up in the hollow, ready for the task before them.

"You'll command the right flank company, Mohomed Waid," said the Major to the Colour-Sergeant. "I'll take the centre *palaver*, and Gabriel, the Abyssinian outlaw, who is of my own faith, will command the left. Though no follower of *your* Prophet, and though no paid soldier of *my* Government, he's a better man than most

of you, so you'll blanked well obey him. *Magrenni? Savvy? Sumagste?*"

"*Walah!*" replied a united chorus, and they chattered like garrulous monkeys about their formations. "Amusah!" (Silence!) said the Major; and then the strange attack developed.

No guns were here to roar defiantly the superiority of the white "sirkal" over the black marauder; no gatling, even, to stammer instant death at the primitive foe. No; it was a question of 450 Baz-Hinterlandis attempting to prove their moral superiority over 3000 of their neighbours, on the strength of the modern rifle, which they scarcely knew how to use, and the presence of one Englishman.

The ragged line of Baz-Hinterlandis (than whom His Majesty has no more loyal subjects, if he will graciously excuse their primitive limitations) advanced cheerily against the iron citadel of the Red Mullah's choice, with whoops and song. Mostly they sang of one *Mohomed Sali*, a national saint, whom curiously enough they shared with their enemy.

"Sali, Muhamed Sali,
M'med Sali, Sali Mahmud, Sal——"

The triumphant chant rose to heaven, broken by an occasional scoffer's advice to the Dervishes to "go and blacken their fathers' honour."

The Red Mullah reserved his fire until the Tribal Horse were within six hundred yards of the gorge. Then he let them have it good and proper.

Fizz, Yang, whopp! Thud! The heavy '450 bullets fell right and left. *F'Plop* and a Baz - Hinterlandi horseman fell doubled up in agony. *H'Whang* and a shattered skull threw the horrible echo back to heaven, before the brain inside its hollow cavity could know what had destroyed it. Crack, crack, crackle, crash, spat the '303's of the Irregular Horse. "Steady on the right there!" shouted the Major through his megaphone at the all too thrusting Mohomed Waid. The line swept forward with dashing ardour, and all seemed well, when suddenly the Red Mullah struck a shrewd blow. From the right flank, and from the hillside above, swept 500 Dervish spearmen. As the Atlantic breaker hits the sand castle, as the polo player sweeps down upon his goal, as the Afridi *ghazi* hurled aside the British bayonet at Maiwand, so the Dervish spearmen fell upon the sorely tried flank of the Baz-Hinterlandis, and drove them back in blood-stained confusion into the midst of their own centre attack. Spear flashed against rifle barrel, bare breasts wrestled against the Government khaki, Hell waged war with the Powers of Light, and the Baz-Hinterland Horse, outnumbered and panic-stricken, fell back in disorder. "Halt! you black camel spawn!" yelled the now frankly blasphemous Major, binding up his own shattered wrist as he spoke. "Come on, Mohomed Waid;

come on, Yusuf;—Oh *blas-tation!* what *are* they doing!"

Mohomed Waid was doing his best. With his own fair hands he shot down two of his faltering countrymen. "Come back, sons of *Eblis*," he cried; "would ye have a white infidel teach ye how to fight? Would ye fly before the Red Mullah's standard? A bastard *Kafir* whom the doctors of Mecca itself abhor?"

The wavering line drew its breath again and re-formed. Back they came like a wounded lioness whose cubs are dead and stink in her nostrils. "Sali!" they cried again. "Muhammed Sali! Throw your Mother upon the dung-hill; sons of nothing-that-is-mentionable!"

The fight wore on all that morning and afternoon, and dusk found the Baz-Hinterlandi Horse still stubborn and unbeaten, albeit nearly two hundred of them were dead or wounded. On the other hand, the enemy were still in frank possession of the hillside, the water, and their own property. Nevertheless they had suffered terribly too, and were running short of their bulky ammunition. The thirst of the attackers was awful, and the men were desperately chewing grass and wild berries in an attempt to assuage it. The Major, sick and faint from the effects of his own shattered arm, and with a mouth like carbonated sandpaper, essayed the task of lighting a cigarette with quivering hands. It was not a success, and throwing it

away again, he sucked deliriously at a moist stalk of the sappy *pawarin* that grew in profusion among the red-hot rocks.

Mohomed Waid, the unfeatable, pumped lead at the Red Mullah until he saw the state of his white officer. He ran to him and gave him—water; how or where procured the Englishman never dared ask afterwards; and Mohomed Waid never told him. It was to the Major more precious than all the diamonds of *El Dorado*. "What shall we do?" he said. "Half of our men are knocked out, the Dervishes still hold the hill, and it'll be dark soon." Mohomed Waid did not reply for a moment. He squatted behind a lead-splashed rock, and shading his eyes against the setting sun looked towards the far distant country in the plain below.

"*Sirkal*," he said suddenly. "See! these be friends."

The Major followed his pointing hand and gasped. A few miles to the north lay a cloud of dust. "What is it?" he asked. "Who are they?"

Mohomed Waid looked again.

"*Sirkal*," he said, "I think it is Clive *Sirkal* with some of his Hindis mounted on the sick and lame ponies that we left behind at the fort. Assuredly it is a great insolence for him to ride our sick and sorry horses, and Allah alone knows how they have carried these heavy sepoy—who cannot even ride a donkey—so far. Nevertheless it is the sending of Allah, for I see six pack-

mules that carry the Hindis' two maxim guns."

The Major laughed harshly and madly. "Young Clive's disobeyed my orders," he chuckled to himself; "bloomin' insubordination,—try him for mutiny after this show." A pause. "All the same, a couple of machine-guns 'll be useful. Blank him for riding my lame and sore-backed ponies though,—he'll kill the lot!"

At 6 P.M. the British attack was renewed with vigour. Two machine-guns, a fresh supply of ammunition, a second white officer, and forty regular though half-dead riflemen, may be the deciding factor in any hitherto drawn fight. Anyhow it was so in this case. "Glad I came," said the Indian Subaltern cheerfully; "you'll not 'condemn' Hindis again, Moriarty, will you?"

"Shut your mouth," replied the Major gratefully; "I'll try you by court-martial if either of us come out alive."

"I don't think!" replied the now entirely happy Subaltern. "If we can only get 'Sister Anne' (his own name for his favourite machine-gun) up on the top of that spur, we'll *enfilade* the wholly bally crush of their marksmen—eh, what?"

The gun was mounted where he desired, and coughed its leaden spray among the now faltering Dervishes. The disciplined fire of the Indian sepoy's tormented them as well, and, filling their water *chagals*, the Dervish horsemen fell back over the crest of the

hill and fled for Karim. Their abandoned comrades on foot lost heart at this, and vanished into the scrub and rocks of the upper gorge. "Hell helps the damned," remarked an old chief, *à propos* of the reversed state of affairs, "and who can fight Satan *but* Satan?" And he mounted his pony as he spoke,—doubtless as an indication of his own saintliness!

One last burst of Dervish fire saluted the sunset, and one last stray bullet found its billet into the coughing lung of the Subaltern, just before darkness fell and the battle was won—for *England*, who did not even know where Baz-Hinterland was!

“For God’s sake give me another drink, Moriarty,” said a feeble voice out of the velvet gloom. “Sorry to be such a bally nuisance, but getting sloshed in the body makes one so bloomin’ thirsty.”

“Right-o, old lad,” replied

the Major, handing him a pannikin of muddy water. “Try a drop of brandy too; I haven’t touched my own flask, but I always carry it.” The dark African night smiled gently over the two wounded soldiers, and the southern wind blew wistfully down the bloody gorge. It was nearly dawn before the Subaltern died, and so he lived to see the false eastern light in the dappled sky, as he lay in the Major’s arms.

“I’m tied up in bally knots,” he remarked, just before the end, “and it hurts what Jorrocks would call ‘Something ’orrid.’ I don’t mind that, but I wish to goodness I’d lived to see the end of the War at home; out here we’re all of us out of it, and we’re damned professionally in consequence; but still—I should have liked to have seen the end of it. Wouldn’t you? Perhaps you will.”

“ZERES.”

“FALLEN ANGELS.”

II. DEFENSIVE MEASURES.

“JONES - GREVILLE ! You will command the company to-day,” said the skipper. “You heard the scheme given out this morning, and have, I take it, worked out an appreciation ; so just get the platoon commanders and give out your orders. I shall not interfere until it’s over. I want to see what you can do on your own.”

Cadet Jones - Greville is a quiet, inoffensive person, whose penchant is the study of “Ecclesiology,” whatever that may happen to be. Previous to adopting temporarily the career of arms, he hibernated in an oriel window at Cambridge, studying with much ardour various dry-as-dust tomes dealing with his particular line of knowledge. In appearance he is small but solid, with a general air of mildness, accentuated by his “fairy” pince-nez and a very pink-and-white countenance. The sum total of his personal appearance leads you to think of the curate who had just lunched off a “gläss of milk and a bāth bun.” As a matter of fact, he is a most hard-working, conscientious person, gifted with a vast intelligence but not much practical idea of how to use it. He is the class of person who will some day be told, during a rearguard action in the stress of a retreat, to hold some tactical point with a

platoon, and then be forgotten. He will not have the sense to retire when it becomes too hot to hold, but the G.O.C. can be quite sure that if he makes a forward movement in time he will find Jones-Greville and half a dozen survivors of his platoon still holding on. Jones-Greville having fired his last cartridge, will be fixing bayonets and wiping his eye-glasses with an expression of gentle surprise at the army having rather forgotten him, and remarking to his men : “You know it’s most *thoughtless* of them not to have helped us.”

The scheme that had been arranged for the day was described on the programme as “Defence of a position in field warfare.” “Field warfare” is the term used to describe common or garden war, in contradistinction to the troglodytic method prevalent at present on the Western front. The skipper of this company is one of the not over-great number of younger officers still left who have practical experience of what real, open warfare means, and consequently has taken this part of the curriculum under his special charge. Most people in England to-day suffer badly from what the C.O. describes as the “suburban outlook”—viz., the idea that field warfare is as extinct as the dodo, and therefore the cherubim have to

exercise a certain amount of effort to eradicate this idea from many of the cadets. This is particularly the case with those who have relations only a degree less unfledged than themselves, who, after going into the trenches for a week on their first arrival at the front, write home to tell the younger members of the family that all the time they spent manœuvring at home was "absolute waste of time."

The piece of country in which these operations took place is mostly high wooded parkland, with here and there wide spaces of gorse sloping down to fields of young corn. In the centre of the position is a clump of pines surrounding a group of two or three small buildings known as Brick Kiln Cottages. The field of view is limited to three hundred yards or so in most places, for nowadays to occupy the good old-fashioned positions with a mile or two of open ground in front is to court more or less certain destruction from the enemy's artillery. As the skipper remarked one day when lecturing on the powers of artillery: "A few years ago we rather thought that artillery served the same purpose as the face contortion drill of the old Chinese troops, namely, to scare the enemy. This war has taught us that it really is a man-killing article." Consequently we nowadays spend much time in choosing humble, inconspicuous positions, and generally trying to be mistaken for turnips. Some of us seem fairly well adapted by

nature for this rôle, but that is by the way.

The chief reason for this particular exercise was to see whether or not certain cadets had profited by their instructors' teaching with regard to selecting ground for their trenches, or "siting their trenches," to use the technical phrase. Some of the cadets spell it "sighting." Phayle says that their reason for adopting this form of spelling is that their trenches generally are a "sight."

Behind Jones-Greville stood four budding Wellingtons nominated for the day as Platoon Commanders. All were busy with protractors and notebooks, and the left-hand man was hastily consulting the Field Service Pocket Book. Obviously it was the gentleman who, on getting the following question in the examination paper last week: "How much earth can a man excavate in four hours?" replied: "If I had to calculate this out for a working party on service I should look it up in the Field Service Pocket Book, *which every officer always carries on the person at all times.*"

For those who are not very well up in military matters, we may as well explain what the Field Service Pocket Book is. Since war has nowadays become a scientific affair, the amount of literature dealing with it is enormous; and as the amount of kit that an officer can carry in war is limited to a few pounds, he can no longer take the library

that he did in the days of the First Afghan War, when each officer was allowed one elephant to carry his personal baggage. So the ever-watchful eyes that look after the Army's interests from the Olympus of Whitehall considered it would be a good thing to devise some small tabloid library of standard works that would not only enable the keen officer to study his profession, or, if of a still more ambitious turn of mind, to prepare for the Staff College, in the interludes of being shelled, but also aid him, if so disposed, to acquire some useful trade or other—*e.g.*, cooking or medicine—which would help him to add to his income when he retired. So they took counsel together and set to work to boil down the following publications:—

1. Field Service Regulations, vols. i. and ii.; Manual of Military Law; King's Regulations; Infantry Training; Cavalry Training; Artillery Training; Manual of Military Engineering, vols. i. to vi.; Royal Warrant; Financial Instructions; Army Regulations (India), vols. i. to x. and xii.; Hamley's Operations of War; Manual of Topography; and also extracts from all other books of military interest.

2. Mrs Beeton's Cookery Book.

3. Cassell's Family Doctor.

4. Dictionary of Nautical Terms.

5. Post Office Directory.

6. Old Moore's Almanac.

7. Army and Navy Stores Catalogue.

8. 'The Times' Encyclopedia (abridged).

And finally, in order that the officer should not become too "insular," they put in various extracts from foreign publications, together with a chapter on international law. They produced the book as a neat little volume, with illustrations both black and white and in colours, and put it on sale for the absurdly low price of 1s.

And yet certain firms make a boast about publishing what is in comparison a mere pamphlet, such as 'Nicholas Nickleby,' for 1s., and stigmatise the War Office as unbusinesslike and antiquated!!

The powers that be, with that care for detail which stamps the born organiser (Napoleon spent a lot of time in one campaign in seeing that every man in his army carried two iron nails and a piece of wood to enable the force to bridge the Danube), also inserted in the book a little table showing what the officer and man should carry on service; in which pocket his watch and in which his malted milk tablets, and every other item necessary for his own comfort and the wellbeing of the army. In the middle of the table they wrote: "In the haversack: . . . the field service pocket-book, weight 6 ozs."

So next time you see an officer sprawling in the shade of a hedge perusing a book, don't think he is wasting his

time over a frivolous novel, because in reality he is feverishly reading up how to make a rice pudding as the cook has given notice, or else memorising the branches of the aorta. Consequently behold No. 1 platoon commander busy with his Field Service Pocket Book, which, as a result of his imprudent answer to the exam. question, he is compelled to keep on him even when in bed.

No. 2 platoon commander is a very typical "knot," or at least he will be when he eventually gets his commission, but that is some way removed at present, judging by the knowledge, or lack of knowledge, he displays. He stands full six foot four, and looks an ideal officer. But the clothes supplied to Fallen Angels would hide even the pristine radiance of Lucifer himself. The ill-fitting khaki tunic which seems almost an Eton jacket on the *beau sabreur* figure of Longshanks, and the shapeless cap set askew on his fair curly hair, repress the incipient nuttiness which stamps him when one meets him at the station on Saturday going off for week-end leave. On these occasions he reminds one exactly of Pope & Bradley's designs of the "Man of to-day." Solomon in all his glory wouldn't have been in it with Longshanks, and his mien would gladden the heart of any Baltis.

No. 3 platoon commander is our old friend Gabbler. On his left we see a new figure, in the shape of Cadet Fellows. He is a South African, who

fought as a trooper in German South-West. On the conclusion of that short and brilliant campaign he came over to try for a commission at home, and is a fine example of the best class of colonial. Thoroughly reliable and steady, hard working, and gifted with a vast amount of common-sense, well accustomed to think for himself, he should make a first-class officer on service.

Jones-Greville having surveyed the ground from a large mound of earth hard by Brick Kiln Cottages, and brought his Newton-like intellect to bear on the problem in hand, proceeded to issue orders to his platoon commanders.

"Judging by Fellows' expression," said Phayle, "Jones-Greville is surpassing himself in 'sighting' trenches. I wonder if even the newest cadet would plant a trench under that tree," pointing to a solitary umbrella-shaped tree in a clearing which formed a landmark visible for at least two miles.

"Can't be done," said Verger. "Not even by Jones-Greville."

"Wrong," said the skipper. "Look at those men," and sure enough a party of cadets, with picks and shovels, under the leadership of Robinson of Field Service Pocket Book fame, filed off to take up a position under the solitary tree, where after divesting themselves of their coats they prepared to dig vigorously or not, according to individual taste and the proximity of the instructor. There seemed to be some slight

dissatisfaction at the site chosen for the trench.

The cadet, once he removes his khaki tunic, reminds you of nothing so much as a butterfly emerging from the chrysalis stage; for the sack-like garb generally conceals a Joseph's coat of many colours, and gaudy ones at that, in the shape of school and college sweaters of the weirdest hues. I suppose the cadets feel they must wear something to make up for the appalling garments of store issue.

Robinson got his working party into position by many weird evolutions, and eventually behold them in a rough line approximating to the design of the trench intended. Certain numbers fell back a pace or two to mark out the portions of unexcavated earth left at intervals to localise the effects of high-explosive shells or bombs. These are known as traverses, and, according to Robinson's definition of them at one of the earlier examinations, they are "earthenware structures to localise the backward velocity of high-explosive shell." As "Gamaliel" remarked, "When is a flower-pot a parados?"

"Let's go and question Jones-Greville as to his dispositions," said the skipper to his staff. "We want something good for 'Punch' this week."

They walked over to the mound and found the cadet in question, with a very harassed look, busy with a note-book, writing out a report. Seeing the officers, he

sprang to attention, losing his note-book and handkerchief in the proceeding. Having allowed time for his palpitating nervous system to settle down, the skipper said—

"Now, Jones-Greville, will you tell me what dispositions you've made, and where you've placed your trenches? And don't forget I always want reasons for everything."

Jones-Greville, after mopping his fevered brow, proceeded to explain that he had three platoons in the firing line and one in support.

For the benefit of the uninitiated, we may as well explain that when a force is holding a position and waiting for the enemy's attack, its commander divides it into two halves—one to occupy the position, and the other, known as the "General Reserve," or, as the French prefer to call it, the "Masse de Manœuvre," to fall upon the attackers at a suitable moment and, converting the defensive into the offensive, drive them headlong from the field. The portion that holds the actual position is again subdivided into "firing line," to hold the trenches; "supports," to make good the losses in the firing line; and "Local Reserves," who keep the defence alive by sallying forth at inconvenient moments to make small counter-attacks against the advancing line of the attackers.

The action may be compared with the method of dealing with undesirable visitors—*e.g.*, bailiff's men. The firing line is, as it were,

the Parlourmaid who says "Not at home"; the supports are the Butler coming to the aid of the Parlourmaid; the Local Reserves are the "Boots" skirmishing against exposed flanks; while the Gardener and the Bulldog may be taken as the "General Reserve" or "striking force." And of these the Bulldog may be considered as the cavalry previously stationed round a corner ready to dash in at the critical moment, and, hanging on to the enemy's rear, convert defeat into rout.

On this occasion Jones-Greville had nothing to do with the Reserve, that being provided, or supposed to be provided, by other companies. His was simply one company finding firing line and supports, a mere pebble on the beach, in fact.

Having laboriously explained why he had divided his force in the way he had done, he then proceeded to take the officers on a personally conducted tour of inspection round the trenches. The skipper didn't say much, for he likes to give people a lot of rope in order that the suspensory progress may be more complete, but on arrival at the supporting platoon he was compelled to recognise that early as it was the hanging was already over and nothing remained but the post-mortem. So he tenderly inquired—

"Would you explain, Longshanks, why you adopted this position for your platoon. I always like to see if people

have a reason for what they do."

Longshanks reflected in a meditative fashion, murmured something about "thought it seemed a good position" and relapsed into silence.

"Quite so," said the skipper. "An excellent position. Here you have natural cover in the shape of a high earth-mound sufficiently long to protect the whole of your platoon, sufficiently high and steep enough to give immunity from shrapnel fire if your men keep well in at the foot of it, naturally screened also by brushwood so as to be rendered very inconspicuous. In fact, one doesn't realise it is a mound until one comes close up to it. You have, I also note, placed your men at the foot of it, in order to get the most protection, I presume." Longshanks tries not to look too much like Napoleon during this eulogy. "Now, just as a matter of curiosity, would you tell me *why* you chose the enemy's side of the mound to sit on instead of our side? I know some people consider the 'King's friends' as more dangerous than the 'King's enemies' when it comes to guns shooting over infantry, but it's not a good maxim to work on as regards taking cover."

Longshanks' six foot odd of height appears to crumple visibly.

"Now then, go and take up a position on the *obvious* side of it—namely, the one where you will be protected from the enemy's fire, and for the Lord's

sake try and use what little common-sense you may happen to have been gifted with."

"Got some weird notion in his head about forward slopes and dead ground," says Phayle to the skipper as the platoon moves off. "Wonderful how these fellows' brains work. There's a man, quite a useful person in his own profession, and yet when he tries to do a little soldiering appears to suffer from complete and absolute lack of even the smallest glimmerings of common-sense. If it rained he'd get under a roof, but here when it's supposed to be going to rain shrapnel and he's got a 'roof' handy, he deliberately stands outside it."

"I suppose it's the result of so many people trying to make out that war is a most complicated game instead of being a mere exercise of your wits. Some of the books one buys by military writers seem specially designed to render simple matters complex to the ordinary intellect. The consequence is that after perusing one or two works of that description, the embryo soldier comes to the conclusion that the right way to solve any tactical problem is to think out a common-sense answer and then do the exact opposite. Well, now let's go and sit under those trees over there and give 'em an hour or so to exercise their own ingenuity."

They went off and sat down under the trees, and "the talk slid north and the talk slid south." The cherubim hailed from various quarters of the

Front, and between them had seen quite a lot of the world. The skipper of the company had fought the Hun in East Africa, and had theories of his own on fighting in close country which he expounded in season and out of season to his subalterns, who were unable, owing to their juniority, to tell him to dry up.

Phayle, the second in command, had seen all that was to be seen from Mons to early in the present year. Starting as a despatch-rider, he got an infantry commission in next to no time. What he doesn't know about trench warfare isn't worth knowing, so the skipper, who, when he gets off the subject of close-country fighting or "bushwhacking," has occasional lucid intervals, appointed him instructor-in-chief on trench warfare. He is of medium height, very solidly built, and possessed of most tireless energy. A strict disciplinarian, he has a quiet gift of "biting" people who are slack, which is no small factor in the company's wellbeing. There is no doubt that rigid discipline is the foundation of success in war, and Phayle has a pretty way of keeping men in hand.

Vergier is of another type altogether. He was a colour-sergeant of some eighteen years' service before he got his commission at the beginning of the war. In appearance he is short and slightly bow-legged, with a rather sallow complexion relieved by a pair of exceptionally keen eyes, round the corners of which plays generally a humorous twinkle. The

big scar on his neck is a Turkish souvenir from Gallipoli. The cadets like him, and his lectures on interior economy and regimental duties are listened to the more attentively from the fact that they are delivered by one who has real inside knowledge of the man's point of view as opposed to the officer's.

The junior subaltern, "Gamaliel," is one of the seraphim. He is a solicitor in peace time, but he ought to have been a soldier, judging by the keenness with which he takes to the game. At present the company commander has put him in charge of the cadets' mess, to his great disgust, for he finds himself wasting valuable time in getting estimates for crockery and studying the market price of butter, when his soul would fain be working out "appreciations of tactical situations."

"It's a wonderful thing how a bullet or two stimulates people's digging powers," said Verger. "Look at that lot over there playing with their entrenching tools. They look like a lot of chickens scratching up a poultry-yard. Yet if some one was shooting at them they'd be half-way under ground by now."

"Or failing bullets a lance-corporal's stripe," said the skipper. "I once knew a C.O. of an Indian regiment in the days before we had the entrenching tool." (This is a miniature spade, *cum* pick-axe, *cum* tin-opener, that every infantry soldier now carries slung from his belt to enable

him to improvise some form of cover if the transport with the full-sized tools is unable to get up.)

"He was one of these people who are born before their time. He considered every man should carry some such article, and invented a portable frying pan and grubber combined. When the sepoy was not digging with it he was supposed to cook his food on it. So he had 500 of them made up, and one morning issued them to the sepoys. They accepted them meekly, as merely another proof of the Sahib's insanity, and listened to his exordium. His Hindustani being weak, they didn't understand what the tawas were for, and most of them imagined them to be iron loopholes. Then he took 'em out to do an attack, and in the middle announced that the attack was hung up, and they would dig in with the "tawas." Blank surprise of the regiment. They tried digging sideways and frontways, and some discarded the tawas and tried their bayonets. But one wily Punjabi, a confederate doubtless of the Armourer-Sergeant, who made the tawas, dug himself underground with the tool in about two hours. (The soil was very soft.) The C.O., coming round to inspect, fell into the hole and forthwith made the valiant one a lance-corporal. The average depth of excavation of the rest of the regiment was about 2 inches.

"Next day they went out again, and the whole regiment disappeared under ground in

one hour and three quarters. When the C.O. came round he was greeted with pleased smiles, and people throwin' chests in all directions, and altogether there was such an air of expectancy about them that he had to ask the Subadar Major what was up. 'Please, your honour, it is understood in the regiment that all who dig as much with the "tawa" as Fizoz Shāh did yesterday will be appointed lance-corporals.' Tableau!"

"Don't think any of our sportsmen are going to gain chevrons to-day," said Gamaliel. "But probably a largish number of them will earn stripes up to forty less one."

"Let's go look see," said the skipper, getting up. They started at one end of the line, and made the men get into their trenches, the captain criticising the construction as he went. Fellows' was quite a useful bit of work, nicely sited, but when they came to Robinson's under the solitary tree the skipper felt constrained to acid speech.

"Now, Robinson, look at your trench—nice field of fire; you can see about 4000 yards in places, and also you have a nice shady tree exactly in the middle of it, the only tree within a circle of a mile or so. But in case the hostile artillery are short-sighted and don't see the tree at more than two miles off, you'd better put up a large white notice-board as well—'This way to the trench,'—nothing like making assurance doubly sure."

Robinson's face was a pic-

ture as his attention was directed to the tree.

"What made you put it there?" asked the skipper.

"Please, sir, I thought we had to be in line with the next trench."

"Then, if there'd been a well in line instead of a tree, I suppose you'd have been at the bottom of the well?" said the skipper.

"He'll avoid conspicuous trees for a long time to come, I think," said Phayle, as they moved on to the next lot of trenches. "Now for Gabbler's little lot."

Gabbler's trenches were quite well placed, a little too far forward for the instructor's critical eye, but still one has seen officers of quite a lot of service site trenches worse than Gabbler's.

After approving of them and pointing out how they might be still further improved, the staff continued the round.

When the inspection was over, the company collected the tools and stores and fell in. From Robinson's dejected air it was plain that his platoon had been telling him what they thought of his trench. The way of the transgressor is said to be hard, but the way of the platoon commander in a cadet company is harder, because if he gets "strafed" by the O.C. for bad work, directly he gets off parade his command proceed to strafe him too for bringing *them* into disrepute. In order to give every cadet opportunities of practice in command, platoon commanders are appointed daily

by roster, and consequently are not invested with any protective mantle of dignity to shield them from the arrows of criticism of their fellows, such as protects the permanent N.C.O.

As they passed the remainder

of the company, a gentle voice inquired: "And where's your notice-board? *What* did the captain say you were to put on it? This way to the Zoo?"

Platoon rivalry runs high in our ranks.

III. "THE BRIDGE BUILDERS."

Phayle cast himself into a chair and ordered a drink with a weary sigh. He'd done a hard day's work, and felt that the hour's rest before dinner would not come amiss. There were times when he looked back with regret to the restful days in Flanders, when he knew nought of cadet battalions, and one got a little time off now and then when the Hun was not too uppish.

"Thank the Lord for an evening off at last," he reflected, lighting a pipe.

The anteroom door opened and a cadet entered: "Note from the captain, sir. No answer." Phayle opened it and read:—

"DEAR PHAYLE,—Just remembered that we're down for bridging to-morrow. Please see about getting the material ready near the castle moat to-night, and buy as much rope as is necessary."

"Wish he'd go and hang himself with it," groused Phayle as he dragged his tired frame out of the chair. "That ends *my* free evening," and crawled out to his motor-bike to spend the rest of the evening tearing round the town

trying to buy rope and other stores suitable for bridge-making.

Most people imagine that the infantry soldier divides his time between marching, shooting at the enemy, and doing "sentry-go."

Not thus but far otherwise is the real case. The chief aim of the complete infantryman is to become a Jack-of-all-trades.

He is expected to have a knowledge of the following trades in addition to the obvious one of fighting:—

1. Builder.
2. Carpenter.
3. Telegraphist.
4. Mining Engineer.
5. Sanitary Engineer.
6. Cook.
7. Surveyor.
8. Reporter.
9. Housemaid.

If an officer, he is expected to add the following professions to the list:—

10. Barrister.
11. Magistrate.
12. Doctor.
13. Schoolmaster.
14. Architect.

The commander of No. 2 in making up his programme

of work considered that one day might be profitably spent in teaching his company how to make a bridge.

Now if you want a bridge over a river in civil life, you go to an expert who spends his life in drawing up plans and estimates of bridges. He will, at a price, furnish you with an estimate and plan, which will then be handed over to a contractor who makes a speciality of bridges. At his beck and call will be many skilled labourers versed in all possible knowledge of bridge construction and furnished with every modern appliance. At the end of six months or more they will produce you a bridge.

In the army, if you want a bridge, you send for the nearest infantry subaltern and say, "Take your platoon and bridge that river for me. We've got no material, so you'd better find some."

The subaltern will then sit down and make a plan of the proposed bridge, spend the rest of the morning in stealing timber and other necessary materials, and turn up at five in the afternoon to tell you that it is ready for your use.

This is the first lesson all soldiers have to learn—namely, "How to make bricks without straw."

So the unfortunate Phayle sallied forth into the highways and byways and gathered together all the spare bits of timber, logs, planks, stakes, &c., that he could beg, borrow, or steal, and had them con-

veyed to the banks of the castle moat.

The town in which the Fallen Angels are quartered boasts a "Castle,"—that is to say, on one side of the town is a marshy plot of ground, in whose centre is a circular enclosure of high banks covered with magnificent trees. In one corner of this is a pile of half a dozen stones, with a notice-board to inform the passer-by that these are the ramparts of the once famous castle. Around the embankments runs a ditch about fifteen yards wide, filled with about two feet of water and four feet of mud of the consistency of porridge and of the odour of very dead Huns.

This the skipper proposed to bridge by means of what in military circles is known as a "trestle bridge."

After breakfast he assembled Nos. 1 and 2 platoons (Phayle, who normally instructs No. 2, was still busy in the old-clothes' shops buying ropes), and with the aid of a black-board and a bit of string held forth on the science of bridge-building. He discovered, as a helpful start off, that his commando was utterly ignorant of the very first rudiments of the game, knowing not even how to tie a reef-knot; so the first part of the instruction consisted in teaching them the different forms of lashings used to fasten together the various portions of the bridge. Please, good reader, do not run away with the idea that you are going to hear about the construction of a bridge like Westminster or the Tower Bridge.

The Army is conservative, and lack of time and material compel us to bridge in the fashion of our ancestors — viz., with wood.

A trestle bridge consists of a large number of trestles (square frames of heavy timber) placed upright in a stream at intervals of four or five yards. These are then firmly fixed together with ropes or light spars or wire, if available. Between them, further long spars, known as road-bearers, are laid at right angles to the trestles; and finally, on these we fasten stout planks to form a roadway, upon which if we have time we lay a road surface of earth. Lastly, we put up a notice-board at each end of the bridge, bearing information as to its weight-carrying limitations. For instance—

"Bridge for infantry in fours. Adjutant and Quartermaster-Sergeant, please wade."

Or else, perhaps—

"Bridge to carry light motor lorries. Field Officers' valises to be taken over the Railway Bridge 3 miles down stream."

If there is any danger of our bridge being used, we go sick before the operation commences.

So the skipper held forth on the ways and methods of making bridges, teaching his command step by step, from the reef-knot to the clove hitch and from the clove hitch to the square lashing. Then soaring to greater heights, they passed to the construction of the trestles, differentiating between the uprights, known as "legs," and the crosspieces, described either as "transoms"

or "ledgers," according as they are at the top or bottom of a frame, and lastly, learning how the X-timbers, known as "diagonal braces," are used to stiffen the frame.

By midday the cadets were going strong. There are many kinds of knots—some of them remain knots when your back is turned, most of them do not. Cadets, unless watched, generally tie the second kind. Robinson, however, had been practising in the corner, lashing his leg to the lecture tent-pole with a square lashing. He builded better than he knew, for when the company fell in he had to resort to a knife to get free. Others, however, are not quite so successful. Jones-Greville is a methodical genius, who has discovered that for every one reef-knot he ties, he ties three "grannies." So if a reef-knot is required he hastily ties four knots and then takes them to Carlton, the scout, to inquire which one is a reef. On receiving the required information he discards the remaining three and goes on happily to the next job.

When bridging a stream the first thing to do before actually making the framework is to get a plan of the bit of water to be bridged. This is made in the form of a section, showing the depths at different points. For this purpose a boat is required, and no boat being available on this occasion, one had to be improvised; so Carlton, an erstwhile scout-master, was sent out to see what he could find in the way

of floating material. He returned wet, hot, and weary, but happy, lugging behind him with a muddy rope a water-logged tree trunk and half a camp table, which he proceeded to bind together. He then pushed it out into the stream and climbed on to it. Now the buoyancy of the tree trunk, plus the table, was such that it floated exactly level with the surface of the water. But when Carlton climbed on to it its buoyancy became the minus type, and it floated six inches *below* the surface. It is true that the depth of water in the moat would have allowed him to wade, but all the scouts he had ever read about invariably crossed mighty rivers on improvised rafts, and so he preferred to sit in six inches of water sounding the mud with the long pole, looking for all the world like a child's celluloid duck which is overweighted, and in consequence only emerges half an inch or so from the bath. As he progressed across the stream, now and then sliding off into the mud, capsizing the boat and then climbing on again, he shouted out at intervals what he fondly believed to be the actual depth. He had nearly reached the far bank when the much-frayed rope finally gave up the ghost, and the table parting from the tree trunk deposited him plump in the mud. However, his voyage of exploration had enabled Robinson, on the near bank, to produce on a page of his Army Note-book 153 a hieroglyphic

which purported to be a section of the moat. And on that plan the class proceeded to construct the trestles.

The timbers available were of all shapes, sizes, and descriptions, varying from the goal-posts Phayle had pinched in the dewy dawn to the flag-staff belonging to the local Y.M.C.A. There was a certain amount of struggling among the cadets detailed to each trestle in their not over-successful endeavours to get together a more or less homogeneous collection of timber for their particular frame. It was a sight for the gods to see Gabbler trying to make a fifteen-foot Rugger goal-post and the pole of a bell tent serve as legs for one and the same trestle. However, the first trestle was eventually completed and launched, and a little later the road-bearers were laid out from the bank and firmly lashed into place, the last one pushed out taking a cadet in the small of the back on its way and plunging him off his perch into the stream.

Then it suddenly occurred to Phayle that there were no planks available with which to make the actual roadway. Being unable to think of anything that might serve the purpose, he reported the fact to the skipper. Phayle had done a lot of bridge-building in his time, but he had been very much spoilt by having always constructed his bridges out of much-used material provided by the R.E., and consequently, as he put it,

"the trestles fell into place if you merely looked at 'em." The skipper, on the other hand, had done most of *his* bridging in parts of the world where training money is scarce and material scarcer. As a natural result, he was a past master in the creative art of improvising something out of nothing. So he said to Phayle, "Tell 'em to bring their bed-boards along." To the ordinary person in civil life the word "bed" implies a construction of iron, brass, or wood, with a mattress of spring chains or other pleasantly yielding substances. To the private soldier, however, the word conveys a hard and painful memory of three pine boards, 6 feet 6 inches long by 9 inches broad, each shod with iron at the ends in order to prevent them splitting or being split for firewood. When issued to the soldier, he is given orders with them that they are to be used for sleeping on and for no other purpose. The idea is that unless specific orders were issued, he might use them for tooth-picks, coffins, ironing-boards, or firewood. However, they make as good foot-boards for bridges as they make hard and uncomfortable sleeping-places. Consequently No. 2 platoon fell in, and with great energy rushed off to their barrack-room and returned laden with many long bed-boards. These were then fastened down on the road-bearers, and behold the first span of the bridge completed. "Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute," and

with the first span finished the rest of the construction was fairly plain sailing, and by tea-time the bridge stretched three parts across the moat.

The only difficulty was inducing the trestles to stand upright. They all of them appeared to suffer very badly from that "tired feeling" which characterises the soldier at the prospect of a "fatigue," and they leant all ways, at all angles, except the perpendicular. Some, however, were too tired even to lean, and quietly lay down and floated on the placid surface of the muddy water. Nevertheless, by dint of much pushing and shoving and pulling and heaving, they were all eventually induced to stand up in a more or less upright position, until such time as the badges of servitude, in the shape of various knots and lashings, were fastened about their refractory necks. Not more than four cadets fell into the water during these proceedings.

This ended the parade, for bridge-building may be considered as a parade. The next item on the programme partook of the nature of a fatigue—namely, the reducing of the bridge to its component parts once more. Before doing so, the whole of the two platoons expressed a wish to stand upon their bridge, to impress the gaping crowd of small boys and damsels collected in the field with the powers of the magnificent structure they had just erected. Further, the local

photographer was busy on the opposite bank.

The photographer is a feature of the "Fallen Angels." No matter how secret be the plans of parade, once operations have commenced, the photographer appears on the flank with his deadly machine. His source of information appears to be two smart flapper daughters who, on consideration of receiving news as to the whereabouts of all interesting parades, allow the cadets to escort them to the local "movies." Consequently the seraphim have to suffer rude shocks from time to time when they find themselves the frontispiece of the 'Daily Mirror' or some other go-ahead paper. The photos are, as a matter of course, generally taken at such times as a return from bivouac or "night ops," and Gamaliel's language at seeing himself on the last page of the 'Looking-Glass,' unshaven, unkempt, and generally bedraggled after two nights' bivouacking in heavy rain, marching at the head of what appears to be a column of Serbian refugees who've just looted an arsenal, must be heard to be imagined. The letterpress below generally

adds insult to injury. A picture of the above type is usually labelled "Our future field-m Marshals," or, "Members of that crack corps, the 'Fallen Angels,' preparing to settle the Kaiser's hash. This corps prides itself on its smart turn-out."

So, permission being given, they filed on to the bridge and massed themselves in the centre of the stream.

Alas! Phayle's ropes had been collected hurriedly. Also, perhaps, the Adjutant had *not* waded as requested. Anyway, there was a horrid "crack" as the main guy-rope snapped, which was immediately drowned by the splash and gurgle that marked the submergence of the first two spans and their human freight in the odoriferous mud of the Castle moat.

But No. 2 Cadet Company had built a bridge, or, anyway, learnt how *not* to build one. Then, as the dripping crew assembled on the bank, Fellows wailed: "Look at that d——d camera. To-morrow's 'Daily Wail' will have a picture of us all wading in the mud, entitled 'How the Fallen Angels will bridge the Rhine!'"

"GANPAT."

(To be continued.)

A L E P P O.

BY W. J. C.

TWO cities of the Ottomans there are which more than others retain the spirit and atmosphere and colour of the traditional East. They are Aleppo and Damascus.

For some people Damascus stands unapproached in these respects, and they are prepared to contend that Damascus is itself the East. You generally find, however, that they have not seen Aleppo, or have seen it only perfunctorily, or are carried away by the Biblical associations of Damascus, and make of it a sort of holy city. But those who know both cities well nearly always agree in placing Aleppo first in Eastern flavour, and as the one least encroached upon by influences from the West.

Damascus certainly has the advantage of natural situation and beauty of surroundings, for it stands under Lebanon: it has abundance of water, and gardens famed for extent and luxuriance. It is also, perhaps, the more populous of the two cities, though this pre-eminence is not always admitted by its rival. And with much greater certainty it is the older and more famous city. But these clear superiorities do not affect the claim for Aleppo that in it at the present day the ancient East may be seen and felt as nowhere else.

It is a curious fact that from Aleppo has come much of our English popular knowledge of the East. The English conception of the Turk, at all events up to the Crimean War, is as an Aleppo Turk. These ideas have been traditional for a long time, and doubtless were established by the merchants and merchant seamen of the Levant trade when Aleppo was the eastern metropolis of that commerce. For hundreds of years it was a city more in the English public mind than Constantinople. An open eye for evidence of how much Aleppo figures in English life during three centuries collects many allusions to this great centre of Eastern trade. You find the name on tombstones and memorial tablets. You may come upon an Aleppo House. There was, I believe, in the city of London an Aleppo Coffee House. In books and newspapers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the name also occurs frequently. Shakespeare, for instance, makes one of the witches in "Macbeth" say—

"Her husband's to Aleppo gone,
master o' the Tiger."

And into Othello's mouth he puts a reference which has significant marks of truth, and sounds like the echo of some

old tale of the Levant heard in a London tavern of the day—

“That in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turban'd
Turk
Beat a Venetian, and traduced the
state.”

A beating is still the Turkish process in such quarrels where the opponent is a person of beatable size, and not under the protection of a Great Power. It is still the favourite public expression of displeasure in circumstances which do not call for the taking of life. Many times you may still hear some Turkish anecdote closed with the statement, “gave him a beating.”

Any one at all familiar with the history of Aleppo and its old trade with England approaches the city with more than ordinary interest. You may be whisked into Aleppo by a pert little railway from Tripoli or Beirout or Damascus, but much better it is to enter by road from west or east or north. Not that any greatly impressive view, distant or near, is to be had whichever way you enter; but by road you come slowly, enough of the city is revealed from afar to awake imagination, and at least you do get a fairly wide general view of the place. And if you come from the north on a fine day in spring-time you will be well satisfied. The road is really the best in Asia Minor; and for hours you see the upper part of the vast citadel, rising above the gentle undulations and green wheat of the Syrian plateau

like a distant blue rock—as at first you think it is—to whet curiosity, and then to fix your evening goal. Half sunk amidst the growing wheat are little villages whose roofs are domes of staring whiteness. Here and there are glimpses of flowering almond and the green trails of young willows beside a well. Along the roadside are many familiar wild flowers—crocus, iris, violet, anemone, primrose—and others not so familiar, and some unknown. The sky is serenely blue, the sun fiercely hot, yet the air has a touch of coolness and is strangely soft; for it is Syrian air, which you do not appreciate fully unless you have come from hail and snow and biting winds among the mountains of the North. Now and then in the west, when the road rises, the view is closed by a far-away mountain range carrying snow, like a white cloud, along its crest. That is the “Mount Amanus” of old geographers, which stretches from Antioch northward to the Anti-Taurus, and its reverse slopes go down steeply to the Mediterranean.

And then at last comes a turn in the road, and you go down a gentle descent, with the roofs and minarets of Aleppo and the mighty citadel clear before you. You cross the railway line by a level crossing, and hear the incongruous puffing of engines. Then you are in the Azizieh quarter—the residence of Europeans,—and a great busy

street goes onward to the heart and mysteries of the city, brooded over by the citadel.

Aleppo stands in the shallow valley of the Kuwaik, a small river which flows through it; but the impression you get is that the city is in a very slight, saucer-like depression. In search of the seven hills on which, in emulation of Rome and Constantinople, Aleppo is said to be built, you may waste much time and yet not discover them, for it is a far-fetched claim. There is nothing in site or surroundings with any pretence to beauty. Low green hills like gentle downs surround the city and on the west are covered with loose grey stones. There are gardens and orchards along the Kuwaik; but this is no place of pleasant foliage—you will see not a vestige of forest trees within eighty miles,—it is a great, compact, stone-built, densely-peopled Eastern city set down in a green depression. Its area is great, and its population is great for the area. More than 200,000 souls are within its boundaries, and some residents who ought to know increase that figure by half and make Aleppo as populous as Smyrna. Anyhow it is a big, immensely impressive city with little of the decay and shabbiness found in most other Turkish cities.

If you look at its position on a map you wonder why this old city should be here and why it should have shown such vitality. At this day you marvel at its appearance of prosperity

and activity. You cannot well imagine how it lives. Agriculture, commerce by road, manufactures of which you see few signs, do not appear to explain its existence. You can understand well why Antioch, sixty miles away, and near the sea, and upon a gorge giving access to a port, should have been a great and famous city. And yet Greek Antioch, like so many great Greek cities of the past, has decayed, and is now merely a town of twenty thousand souls, while Aleppo has remained and grown. Antioch you would have thought had every element of geographical position and glorious site to ensure permanence and prosperity. A great fertile plain coming to its gates; a limitless country of pastoral and agricultural wealth beyond this local plain; the sea, and a port twenty miles away, with an easy passage through the mountains to it; and all on the highroad, so to say, between Europe and Asia and Africa. And for the amenities it had mountains beside it; rushing streams, a lake, a river, and the Syrian climate.

You wonder at the failure of Antioch to hold its own in this great position, and wonder still more that Aleppo should stand while Antioch failed, till you look a little farther afield. Then it is clear that Antioch grew and flourished on a local basis—on the sea, the local plains; on the beauty and strictly local advantages of site; on the character and peculiarities of its Greek

citizens; but stood outside the area of those wider influences which ensure permanent greatness. It is the story of almost all the great Greek cities of the ancient world. Their greatness was largely the work of their citizens. These cities were in a sense exotic creations, and when the citizens lost their vigour the cities declined, and there were no deep-seated, inevitable reasons for other races to renew them.

Aleppo, on the contrary, stood within the area of the greater influences. Now, these greater influences were largely or almost entirely the great natural overland trade routes and what created them. Antioch, indeed, might intercept the route which lay to and from the Mediterranean, but in days of limited sea trade, accompanied by countless risks, this was a traffic small in comparison with that which flowed by the land routes. The overland routes between Europe and Asia and Europe and Africa went round the head of the Gulf of Alexandretta, and could cross the Amanus range by only two passes: the northern one now called the Baghtche Pass, the southern the Beilan Pass. Antioch lay too far to the south to intercept traffic going by either of these passes, and therefore was in a sort of backwater. Traffic crossing Beilan Pass, between east and west, would go several days' journey out of its way to reach Antioch and then regain the direct route; for traffic by the Baghtche Pass,

Antioch meant a still greater diversion. These two passes, one believes, have had almost everything to do with the impermanence of Antioch and the permanence of Aleppo. Once Aleppo was established, it became in time the arriving and starting place of all caravans: a clearing-house for all trade in these parts; a caravan junction like no other; and a metropolis of inter-continental commerce.

There is another potent influence also which has ever favoured Aleppo and ever acted against Antioch. It is an influence active still, and doubtless will always remain so; always assisting Aleppo, always exerting itself powerfully against any commercial centre farther south. It is the same strong influence which, at the present time, requires that Alexandretta shall be the future seaport of these immense and naturally wealthy territories, as against any seaport south of Alexandretta. The influence in question may be called the natural pull exerted by a large portion of Asia Minor. As a great and rich territory in the days of Antioch, much of the trade between east and west originated in this part of Asia Minor, and the tendency of such trade was to seek a route as little to the south as possible, and not only a route but a mart, in the same favourite position. By reason of the routes Aleppo suited these requirements well. If there had been no Aleppo this trading centre and the route would both have been drawn north-

ward rather than more to the south. Aleppo, in fact, was a happy compromise which served an area much greater than any to which Antioch could aspire.

Though it lost much of its overland commerce to the Cape of Good Hope route, and more to the Suez Canal, Aleppo has always retained importance and a large trade. These saving factors of prosperity have been due chiefly to Asia Minor. Although geographically a Syrian city, (it is still more a city of Asia Minor by the area which it serves. Even without railways, it is the commercial centre for great districts to the west and north and east, as well as in the south. Figuratively and literally, all roads in these regions lead to Aleppo. The city is, indeed, likely to enjoy greater prosperity in the coming era of railways than ever it did in days when caravans by the hundred, crowding the seven gates, came and went daily between Antioch, Damascus, and Bagdad, and the mountain passes of the west and north and north-west, which gave access to Asia Minor and Europe. Even now Aleppo attracts railways, as of old it did roads and caravan tracks. Its position at the corner, as it were, round which railways like roads perforce must come, will serve it well in the future. It will become, among other things, the junction of inter-continental railways. Aleppo railway porters of days not very distant will grow fa-

miliar with the names of places exceedingly far off. "Change here for Mecca, Cairo, and Bagdad," is said to be a cry which has been heard already at Muslimie—the pleasant-sounding name of Aleppo's Bagdad Railway station—but that is nothing to what the future may hold. Here, in fulness of time, you will change not only for these cities of ancient fame, but for Uganda, Madagascar, and Capetown. Here also you will change for Ispahan, Bombay, and Calcutta; and a little later the surprising names may well be added of Mandalay and—with the aid of a short sea passage—Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney. Such developments Aleppo may see within the years of men now living.

Every city has its own individuality, the outcome of site, climate, and surroundings; of industries, race, government, religion, tradition, and history, and not least the materials of which it builds. And when you find a solidly built city with a varied history of two thousand years, a city which has known wealth, importance, and dignity, and is great and flourishing still, you may expect it to possess an individuality complex and exceedingly interesting. Of this sort is the individuality of Aleppo.

For one thing, an ever-present sense of age pervades the city—of age and the experience which goes with it. It is old and wise, and has seen much in its time, and has many hidden stories. For another it is important,—and

bears the air of having long been so, of long having had no rival within a wide region; of being a metropolis in fact if not in name. Again, it is massively built. Its older structures, and the great blank walls which often enclose its lesser passages, are constructed of heavy squared stone. Window openings are small; there are many heavy arcades of pointed arches in parti-coloured stones. The minarets are towers of massive smooth stone. The old vaulted khans, whose courtyards are paved with stone and surrounded by arcades of pointed arches, are like fortresses. Its enormous bazaars, greatest of any in the East, are also of stone and arched with stone, and entered by iron-clamped gates which are closed at night. You see at once, also, that those who built here in old days built always against violence.

But more impressive perhaps than any other characteristic of the place is the sense of unknowable mystery which fills it. Possibly it is apparent only to the Western observer, and in reality represents his inability to understand the East, or to think in the same terms. To such an one, however, all things here smack of this subtle quality. To him the people's faces are inscrutable. He wonders what all these busy thronging crowds do for their living in a city where industries are not apparent; what do they think about, having no politics and no newspapers; how do they amuse themselves, having no

amusements! Aleppo houses people of almost every race under the sun—including 20,000 Jews and a greater number of Persians—but its people in the gross have what may be called an Aleppo look, and differ plainly from those of all other Ottoman cities. The visitor asks himself why this should be, and can find no answer except that the city has stamped them with itself.

Mysterious also in their way and full of suggestion are the city's alleys and courtyards. It is a place of narrow, stone-paved, stone-walled passages and interior courts. They remind you somewhat of the old by-ways and yards in the City of London, which are now enclosed by high buildings. But in Aleppo few windows look into these narrow ways—they give the impression of being channels of stone in which flow streams of men all dressed in gorgeous colours. And these men go silently, as if conscious of mystery themselves and too preoccupied to notice you. Now and then from an alley is got a glimpse into an arcaded courtyard, where merchandise in bales and bundles and sacks—all transported on the backs of animals—is piled in stacks; and where camels and asses lie or stand under shady walls or in the bays of arcades; and more men come and go in bright-coloured garments. For, to secure shelter from the sun was as much in the scheme of those who built here in the past as it is now in blazing Smyrna.

These courts and alleys provide striking contrasts in light and shade. Great portions of them are filled with a cool gloom; but you also see bars and shafts of sunlight slanting athwart and making great irregular straight-sided areas of fierce white light on wall and paving. For overhead, when you chance to look up, is a strip or square of deep blue sky and air saturated with light, and seeming to palpitate in the fierce Syrian sun. With all this play of black and white—this draught-board checkering of light and deep shadow—the small, high-placed windows deeply set, the vistas of arched courtyards, the animals where you would expect to see none, and the stream of silent people in bright garments, a great feeling of mystery arises. Conspirators and assassins of the past would have their haunts somewhere off these turning passages you feel sure. They must abound now, you feel equally sure. And then perhaps you remember, as if subconscious memory had prompted the thought, that the word assassin came into the language from these parts,—that a hill-tribe of the name, whose native territory was in the mountains by Antioch, followed customs which have given their name its present sinister meaning. And you may have read, too, that they had haunts in this very city—that here they executed vengeance both for themselves and for payment, and gave no end of trouble to the

Crusader rulers of Antioch and also to the Templar Knights. Some of these old stone walls about you are black with age and polished with the brushing of passers-by during long centuries. These walls and alleys have seen the Assassins without doubt; any men with those instincts would find themselves at home here; you feel that you have got back seven hundred years.

And as if such old associations have left their influence to this day, you hear that even now in Aleppo the knife from behind, the thin cord, the strangling silken sash, all are used in crime as well as the modern bullet.

The most Eastern spectacle in Aleppo is provided by the bazaars. Nothing gives you such idea of the city's trade as these enormous, unending, vaulted bazaars, with a line of shops on each side, and throngs of people and even animals moving between. You may be familiar with the Grand Bazaar at Stamboul, and think it a big thing of its kind, but it is small compared with those of Aleppo. Yet one is told that the vaulted streets of Stamboul's Grand Bazaar much exceed two miles in length. At Aleppo, however, the bazaars take you aback. You wander in them for a couple of hours, and never seem to go over the same ground twice; always fresh ramifications come into view, and always you have a choice of several turnings to take. There they are, each a gangway, perhaps fifteen feet

wide, so packed with people as to make progression difficult except at the general pace.

And these people provide a study of Eastern races by itself worth a visit to Aleppo. If you are able to recognise at sight a dozen of the chief races found in these parts, you may depend on seeing another dozen which you are unable to place. Here is a jumble of humanity more varied, more picturesque, more brightly coloured, more strangely preoccupied, more intent on business, it seems, than anything seen before. For varied colour the scene is like all the showy military uniforms of the world got together. There is gold embroidery and gold lace on white, and black, and scarlet, and blue, and brown, and green. And yet with it all the colours are ever pleasing and never look crude. The bazaars are in gloom except where stabs of sunlight come in from the sides, and these white shafts strike through a blue haze of smoke which fills the vault. The smell of the bazaars is a compound of tobacco and spice, new carpets, animals, human beings, fruit, vegetables—of everything which moves or is sold or used. It is a distinctive Aleppo smell. Along these dim, crowded tunnels are shops, great and small, as closely set as possible, and using every inch of frontage to show their wares.

It is said you may buy almost anything of the West and everything of Asia and Africa in these bazaars. Do you want Mauser or Colt or

Browning automatic pistols, here they are in every calibre. For Manchester goods you turn to the right, for Sheffield ware to the left: for goods of different sorts have each their own part of the bazaar. Brass and silver work from India is here; Chinese ivories and porcelain; silks and prints, carpets and rugs from every carpet-weaving and cotton-printing district between China and the Bosphorus. The peculiar linens and embroideries of Marash are here; so also are African bead-work, French photographic films, and American sewing-machines. A shop outwardly may be little more than a stall in appearance, but you find it extends behind into dim caverns of its own, and that all are packed with goods. More than ever you marvel how these merchants live; whence come and who are the buyers for all this variety of merchandise. You give it up, for even London itself would seem unable to support so many dealers in curious wares.

Interest of another sort belongs to the great commercial khans. These buildings represent warehouses, and the wholesale trade of the city. To them come the caravans, the horses, asses, carts, by which goods from all the world reach Aleppo; from them also go the caravans conveying goods in distribution, for this trade also is a large one.

The typical khan of this kind is a stone building, with a great open courtyard in its midst and an open arcade of two stories around the yard. In

the yard the goods are unloaded and the animals lie down. In the arcades and the rooms behind them the goods are stored and unpacked and made up again. Enter such a khan by its one great gate and you will see bags of pistachionuts, bales of raw cotton, sacks of wheat, packages of tobacco-leaf, also dates, olives, figs, hides—any and every thing in which Aleppo trades. In the shelter of one of the arches, perhaps you come upon some curious process in full swing. It may be the cleaning of hair or wool, or even the making of woollen felt. The cleaning of wool and hair seems to have something of conjuring about it, so immediate are the results, and so unexpected, compared with the rude implement used.

A man seated cross-legged on the paving is the conjurer. His instrument is a wooden bow, about four feet long, in shape like the bow of a violin, but with the back two feet away from several stout catgut strings. On the floor he places a small heap of wool, clotted with mud and dirt, and above it stands his bow, its back in the air, its two projecting horns resting on the floor, and its strings touching the wool. With a wooden mallet he strikes the strings lightly and sets them twanging harmoniously, and then rocks the bow and lets its back strike the floor or wall. Between the tap of the bow on floor or wall comes a tap of the strings with the mallet; and what with the time he keeps, and the twang-

ing strings, there is a semblance to the distant sound of a drum and harps. Having got into time with bow and tapping, perhaps he begins to hum a song. It is all a matter of a few seconds only before the wool begins to rise in a soft white cloud around the bow. It goes on rising, and he slightly stirs it, pulls the lower part more under the strings, changes the position of the bow a little, but keeps up the rocking and tap-tapping, and never breaks the rhythm with which he began. Under the vibrating strings the wool grows into a heap in size like a table, but still he goes on, while a cloud of fine dust rises to the roof of the vault. When he stops he has produced a great mound of soft white fleecy wool, and beneath it is a heap of sand and dirt. So he goes on, in the cool shade of his cloister, twanging and tap-tapping and singing, and half-filling his vault with clean wool as the result of a day's work with this primitive instrument. One may see these wool-cleaners often, for they are in every town and bazaar. But just as often one stops beside them, to hear the sounding strings, the rhythmical tapping, the monotonous song, and to see the magical results which follow. It all is a scene as Eastern in spirit and as ancient as can be found.

In the days of the British Levant Company Aleppo was one of its first posts, and became the most important of all. There was a British Agent here in 1586, and the

Company's post followed in 1622. You may still see the great stone khan, the largest in the city, called the English Khan, which the Company's staff occupied, at once their factory, stronghold, offices, and residence. For nearly three centuries this outpost of English influence and commerce existed in Aleppo. The chief agent was also British Consul, and under him were Vice-Consuls, various "gentlemen of the agency," a British chaplain, factors, clerks, and various other servants of "The Most Worshipful the British Levant Company." Some day a full and explicit history of this Company, and its influence and operations in the Levant, may be given to the world. It will be at least a book whose subject and matter contain as much romance and interest as the history of any other great chartered company which has upheld the English name.

In various old books of the eighteenth century one finds references to this most important English post at Aleppo. From time to time it had trouble with the citizens, and the inmates of the factory found it necessary to keep within their own walls. But on the whole it was on good terms with all, respected, courted by the local authorities, did an immense trade, and made great profits for its proprietors. Not the least curious fact in its history is that for a long period it defrayed the cost of the British Embassy at Constantinople.

Very curious and interesting

it is to read of the life lived in this out-of-the-way place by a little English colony nearly one hundred and eighty years ago. In the khan was an apartment, officially referred to as "The Library of the Most Worshipful the Levant Company." Entering here one day, in the year 1746, as he had often done before, Alexander Drummond, Vice-Consul at the time, noticed for the first time an ancient Greek inscription casually built into the wall of the room. It had come from some demolished Greek building, to which apparently those who built the khan had gone for materials. One reads now and then in these old books of Mr Consul Wakeman, Mr Consul Pollard, Mr Chaplain Hemming, Mr Chitty, and "other gentlemen of Aleppo": of their social intercourse with the Agents of the Dutch and French factories in the place; of how they kept "thermometer tables" of the weather in Aleppo, finding some interest therein—a matter of special interest indeed, when the purpose was to ascertain whether a temperature 77° at 7 A.M. and 84° at 4 P.M. during the summer months was normal. It is chronicled, too, that "all had the fever of this cursed place." Now and then regrets are found that the "Most Worshipful Company" had not fixed its chief factory at Antioch instead of Aleppo, and pointing out that Alexandretta was as much the port of Antioch as it was of Aleppo, and might be reached from the old Greek

city in a third the time. But always those who complain thus come back to the fact that Aleppo had the great trade and Antioch had not.

The Aleppo factory had summer residences at "Guroom and Caramoot" in the Amanus mountains. Without visits of several months' duration to these cool resorts the gentlemen could not keep in health sufficiently to do the Company's business. When opportunity offered and duties were light at the factory, and the country safe, distant excursions were made. In this way some of the Company's officials discovered, or rediscovered, the ruins of Palmyra. There are also references in the books to the Company's regular postal service carried on by its own servants between Aleppo and Bagdad. One gathers on the whole that the "Most Worshipful Company" had great influence in the land and could do pretty well what it chose: that its policy was enterprising, and its affairs exceedingly well managed. There are glimpses, too, of hospitality at the factory,—more often on those occasions when British travellers came from India *via* the Persian Gulf. It appears to have been a recognised route homewards from India in the middle of the eighteenth century. "Mr Munro of Culcairn and his party of gentlemen riding from India arrived this day." So the chronicle reads; and one would like to hear more about their overland journey of May 1748, but no more is given, except that the gentle-

men of Aleppo were greatly refreshed by the visit of Mr Munro and his party.

By much the most striking and impressive building in Aleppo is the citadel. It is said to resemble Edinburgh Castle seen from the west, but is on a much greater scale. Some tell you that it is really built upon a hill which has been so completely enclosed by masonry that all signs of the rock have disappeared, and you look upon what seems to be a mass of stonework so great and lofty that a fellow to it is hard to find. The only ground for this idea is that under the castle are a number of tombs and galleries hewn in rock. The outer walls of the castle, at least, owe nothing to natural advantages in making up their stark height of a hundred and twenty feet. Enclosing them is a vast fosse revetted with squared stones from the bed of the fosse to the base of the towering walls. The whole structure is so huge in height and bulk that its true size is not realised until you make the outer circuit by following a sort of Plaza which extends all round it outside the fosse. Then, indeed, you find that this open space in which the castle stands must be nearly two miles in circumference. If there is a finer or more impressive medieval castle in existence, one does not know where. In colour the castle is reddish-brown. A great, square, tower-like structure stands above the single gateway, and a wide flight of steps goes up some fifty or sixty feet to this

majestic portal after crossing the fosse by a massive stone bridge. The machicolated loopholes, arranged in groups, are the most perfect and complete you will see anywhere. Altogether you have vast height and bulk, much alternating light and shadow, and masonry all in perfect preservation.

On the Plaza, in the shadow of this great pile, just opposite the great gateway, stands the Tomb of Saladin. For Moslems of Aleppo it is the most notable spot in the city. Saladin at least has not passed out of remembrance in seven hundred years among his own people. Another spot of Moslem reverence in Aleppo, sounding oddly

in the company of Saladin, is the tomb of the prophet Zechariah. You are asked to believe it is the true tomb, but cannot; the Moslem Zechariah must be some other Zechariah than the Hebrew one. But it does well enough as a tradition, for in this old, mysterious city any ancient name seems to be in harmony.

"Come by the Bagdad Gate," they say at Aleppo, "and go by Gate of Antioch," meaning that you are a traveller on a long journey; and in the bazaars you buy fruit from Damascus. Such famous ancient places are the company which Aleppo of the Seven Gates has about it.

WOUNDED AND A PRISONER OF WAR.—III.

BY AN EXCHANGED OFFICER.

BEHIND one of the hospital wings there is a tiny garden walled in on all sides by high buildings. Here were some mouldy-looking pear-trees, a ragged gooseberry bush, and a patch of ragged cabbage-stalks. The ground was thickly covered with rotten leaves; in one corner empty broken rabbit-hutches, pieces of broken furniture, broken bottles, and miscellaneous *débris* added an additional note of depression. Still it was a change from the dulness of the courtyard, and the garden, such as it was, became the object of my daily excursions. The gardener, now digging trenches in some distant part of France, might never dig here again, but his two little children played at soldiers every afternoon among the decayed leaves. A large shed at the end of the garden, which had at one time been used as a wash-house, now falling to ruin, still contained a rusty boiler and some broken wash-tubs. In one corner, piled one on top of the other, stood six or seven roughly-hewn coffins made out of old packing-cases.

Le Picard was often a partner in these explorations round the dead garden, and together we visited the coffins. "*Ça voyez vous,*" said this one-legged philosopher, "*ça c'est le dernier costume.*"

Entrance to the hospital

through an archway under the building was barred by a massive wooden "portail." One morning, when the bread-cart had left the gateway open, Picard and I took up our stand on the threshold and looked out into the street. The houses opposite the hospital are modern and uninteresting, walls covered with dirty white plaster, shutters closed and in need of paint. Farther down on the right, as you stand at the hospital door, the street, as it nears the Place Publique, begins to curve, and here were old houses with their quaint old roofs grouped picturesquely against the dull sky, where heavy clouds prepared to renew their steady down-pour.

The street was empty. Farther down there are shops, but they are closed. A German soldier came clattering along the pavement. Just as he reached the hospital we two standing at the door caught his eye and aroused his curiosity to such an extent that he stopped, stared for a moment, then walked backwards for quite a long way and nearly bumped into an officer. A few sad-looking women, carrying baskets and bundles, stopped in the middle of the street and feasted their eyes on Picard. "It stirs the heart," said they, "to see the French uniform." These poor people

made a collection of their scarce sous and presented Picard with one franc fifty. The children gathered in such numbers that I had to ask them to move on for fear of the Germans.

After the children had gone, a little girl, perhaps ten or eleven years old, came shyly up to the door. Under a threadbare cloak, which in the cold wind and rain afforded small protection to her tired little body, she carried a bundle of picture post-cards. Her present errand was not concerned with asking for charity. She came quite near without speaking or looking up, and stretched out a thin grimy little hand to give me a two-sous piece. Having given me the two sous and rendered me speechless with mixed emotions, she turned to run, but Picard stopped her. "Wilt thou not show us the pretty post-cards, my little one?" "That I cannot do," came the resolute answer; "they are not mine to give away, and they cost two sous each to buy." But I, being obviously the possessor of two sous, was allowed to see the post-cards, and in exchange for my two-sous piece chose a view of the *Place Publique*.

At this time the army of occupation at Cambrai was the 6th Bavarians. On the whole, the behaviour of the Bavarian soldiers was excellent. Cases of rioting and drunkenness were rare, and we heard no stories of atrocities such as the Germans were guilty of in Belgium.

Picard and I stood at the

hospital gate every morning for several days in succession, and in no case were we greeted with insults, although I found later on from personal experience that even a severely crippled enemy was not safe from the insulting jests of a German soldier. Of course we always saluted any officer who passed, and our salute was always punctiliously returned. Sometimes a private soldier saluted, and one day two tall bearded reservists stopped, crossed the street, and gave me a packet of cigarettes. Next morning we found the gate closed. A note had been sent from the *Kommandatur* stating that "it was forbidden for soldiers to stand at the door of the hospital." The watchful "*Verboten Dept.*" scored another point and deprived us of a harmless amusement.

A German orderly came on the 17th December with the following strange message: "The General is coming to inspect the hospital, and wishes to know if the Scotch officer would be good enough to wear his uniform." Being deficient of sporran, glengarry, kilt apron, S.B. belt, brogues, and spats, my "uniform" consisted of the khaki tunic, kilt, kilt pin, hose-tops and flashes, grey woollen socks, and black cloth snow-boots. On a black glengarry made by M. Herbin to my own design I wore the cap badge, which I had fortunately taken off and put in my pocket when sitting in the trenches on the morning of the 26th August. I was

making the best of this strange equipment when the arrival of the General and his Staff was announced. They were waiting for me in the corridor outside the Salle cinq. The picture of this group of German Staff officers is one not easily forgotten. I turned slowly in at the door with crutch and stick, laboriously dragging one leg after another, rested against the wall, and saluted. Among the group I recognised Dr Meyer, scowling and ill at ease; also General Oberartz Schmidt, who, eager to show me off as being his own particular prize, was at once snubbed by the General, and subsided into a dignified silence. These Staff officers were all big heavy men of the usual German type, but the General, small, slimly built, with a light grey moustache, had an air of distinction that was almost French. His manner also was tactful and dignified.

After a preliminary question about my health and inquiry as to my white hair, which I had to explain was probably due partly to shock and partly to my head having been so long bandaged up, the conversation got beyond the little German I possessed, and one of the big Staff officers came to the rescue in fluent but guttural English. They could not believe that the kilt was worn in the winter-time, and seemed to think that it was only a parade uniform. Many questions were asked about the advantages of the

kilt as fighting kit. I said that it was a very adaptable uniform, good both for fighting and for running away. This remark was recognised to be a joke, and translated as such to the General. I was asked how many regiments in Scotland wore the kilt, and if all the Highland regiments were composed of Highlanders.

"No," I said in reply to another question, "we do not wear trousers even in winter."

"Schrechtlich kalt im winter," they repeated, nodding at each other suspiciously.

With a polite wish for my speedy recovery the General intimated that the parade was at an end. The Staff clicked its heels and saluted—even Meyer had to swallow his hate and follow the example of the senior officers.

Outside the corridor M. La Directrice and some of the nurses were standing at the foot of the stairs ready to accompany the officers round the hospital, but the General passed by and went out into the court without taking any notice.

The inspection was over.

A lady who lives near Caudry came to see me. She told me that the graves of the British soldiers, both in the churchyard and in the fields around the village, are well cared for by the villagers, and that a large number of identity discs had, with the consent of the German authorities, been locked up at the Mairie. Near the little wood between Audencourt and Caudry, on the spot where we had dug our

trenches on the morning of the 26th August, there are buried seventeen soldiers and three officers.

About the middle of December the Medicin Chef was taken away to Germany.

A number of causes now contributed to make life at the 106 wholly unendurable. An entire absence of discipline among the hospital orderlies and the constant squabbling of the nurses had been points the doctor and I used often to discuss and deplore. Now that the restraining influence of the doctor's age and rank was no longer with us, the evils of disorganisation became every day more apparent. The "Directrice," or head matron of the hospital, was wholly incapable, and by her tactless mismanagement set the whole hospital by the ears. The orderlies grew noisier and more slovenly every day. Youths who had no occupation in the hospital, and only appeared at meal-times, were allowed to air their opinions in endless discussion. Noisy, chattering visitors strolled in at all hours of the day, and there was no corner of the hospital safe from invasion. Quarrels among the nurses reached such a stage of bitterness that many were not on speaking terms. Friends whose kind visits I had always welcomed now came rarely or not at all. It is evident that such a state of affairs portended something more serious than tactlessness or mismanagement. The gossips of Cambrai were busy with many stories to the

discredit of M. La Directrice, but it seemed to me unreasonable that the voice of scandal should be concerned with a plain-looking woman the wrong side of forty. The whole affair may have been merely foolishness and vanity, but it was certainly an indiscretion on the part of M. La Directrice to receive in the courtyard of the 106 Hospital, from the hand of a German orderly, bouquets of white chrysanthemums presented with the compliments of a German officer.

Every morning at 11 o'clock I paid a visit to the Salle cinq. Many of the older inhabitants had gone, some to Germany, others now rested in what Picard calls *le dernier costume*—the last uniform for all of us. No. 6 still complained unceasingly from his corner bed. No. 3, the Chasseur Alpin with a bullet through the chest, had recovered from various complications and was now able to sit up in a chair. Among the newcomers were three English soldiers. Ben Steele, a reservist from Manchester, had one bullet through his arm and one through his leg. Both wounds were healed, but the leg remained stiff, swollen, paralysed, and the pain was ceaseless.

The story of his wound is one of those ugly tales of atrocities committed by individual German soldiers, for which the German Army, with its perfect discipline, cannot escape responsibility. Ben was badly wounded in the arm, and was left lying in the trenches

when his company retired. "I got that in fair fighting," said Ben, pointing to his wounded arm. He told me the rest of the story briefly, and did not care to refer to it again. "When the Germans came along they shouted 'Hands up.' I was lying in the bottom of the trench. I lifted my left hand, but a German soldier, jumping over the trench, fired down at me point-blank, and the bullet, which went through my right thigh, knocked me unconscious." Ben was sent back to England a few months later, and will probably be crippled for life.

On December 5th a party of convalescent British soldiers arrived from the Civil Hospital, among them R. Anderson, a reservist from my own battalion, L.-Cpl. M'Donald, Royal Irish, and Jas. Prime, Rifle Brigade.

I can never forget the four days these men spent with me at the 106—first, because they were such good companions, and second, because two of these men subsequently met death at German hands, under circumstances of revolting inhumanity.

Prime represented all that is best in the typical English soldier. He came from the Midlands, the heart of England. It was a treat for me to sit and listen to the story of his short battle experience, which, a plain and common tale in these times, acquired enthralling interest from the graphic language and quiet humour of the speaker.

Irish, Scotch, and English,

we all gathered in the Salle cinq and forgot our troubles, present and impending.

Prime was a born storyteller. He possessed the rare faculty of making pictures in the minds of his hearers. He showed me a photograph of his wife and children, and I can well remember the description of his home in England. We found a subject of mutual interest in the keeping of poultry on the "intensive" system, and discussed the respective merits of Wyandottes, Leghorns, and Buff Orpingtons.

"Bob" Anderson, when I first saw him, was sitting dressed in blue coat and red kepi at the refectory table with Prime, M'Donald, the Irish L.-C., and half a dozen French soldiers. Right glad I was to hear the familiar accents of my native land!

Anderson could give me no news of the battalion, as he had been knocked out at the same time and place as myself. On the whole, the Germans had so far treated him fairly well. "It was surely the whole German army," said Bob, "that marched along the road near Audencourt when I was lying in the ditch with a broken leg, smoking my pipe. They didn't take much notice. At one of the halts a German stepped out of the ranks—'Hullo, Jock, what's ado wi' you?' said he, and gave me a drink out of his water-bottle. This was a German who had lived for fifteen years in Glasgow! The next halt was a different story. Several of the Germans gathered round, shook their fists at

me, and one of them snatched the pipe out of my mouth and threw it away."

M'Donald, the Irish Lance-Corpl., who soon after died a hero's death at Wittenberg, was a young fellow not more than twenty-one or twenty-two, quiet, sad, and delicate-looking. He had quite recovered from a dangerous wound in the chest, though he was still weak and walked with difficulty.

A photographer came and took a group of the British soldiers, who were mostly dressed in French uniform, and next day they were all taken off to Germany. Their departure for Germany was such a day of sadness for us who were left behind, that it seems as if we must have had some premonition of the future. The men went off loaded with as many parcels as they could carry,—shirts, socks, tobacco, food, a bottle of wine in each greatcoat pocket, and five francs each from the Hospital Funds.

Of the three soldiers, Anderson is the only one who has lived to tell the story of what befell after leaving the courtyard of the 106 on Dec. 7, 1914. Anderson survived, was eventually exchanged, and we met a year later in Millbank Hospital. The following is the story in his own words, taken down in shorthand. It is a story which bears the stamp of truth in every word, and is corroborated in every detail by a Government report published in all the daily papers on April 10, 1916:—

"When we left Cambrai Station, we were sent in a hospital train to Giessen; it took us three days. We had one basin of soup each day, and a piece of bread.

"When we got to Giessen we were taken to a waiting-room at the station and bad used. All the English were put on one side, called 'English swine' and that kind of thing. We were then taken in a motor ambulance to the Town Hall in Giessen. We were three weeks in that hospital and the food was all right there, but we, especially the English, were bad used all the time by the orderlies. There were four English altogether—M'Donald, Prime, and myself, and another chap in the Wilts. We went from there to Giessen camp, a great big French camp, and had to march two and a half miles with two sticks; I was nearly dead when I reached that camp; it was all uphill, and a crowd behind us shoving us on. Were there three days, then had orders to fall in and march to the station again. We started to march to the station, but I was not fit to do it, and some one stopped me in the town, put me on a car, and took me to the station in the car. We got to Wittenberg the next day, and as soon as we arrived in Wittenberg all the people were at the station, a big crowd, men and women. They all had big sticks, some had bars of iron, and we had to run the gauntlet of this—of course I could not do so. I got one terrible kick, but anyhow I managed to get into

camp, and as soon as we got into camp we got knocked about by the Germans, and everything was taken from us.

"Of course the food was horrible all the time. We had heard stories about typhus in the camp, and the French doctors inoculated us. I took ill about the beginning of February, and the Frenchman took my temperature, which was very high. He ordered me to the hospital, but there were no stretchers to be got. Six men carried me down to the bottom of the camp, about half a mile, and dragged me into an empty bungalow. It was in the same camp; there was no isolation. I was put on the floor amongst a lot of Russians; there were very few beds, and I was on the bare floor. In the camp there was one bed between three men, and I had left my bed in the camp. I lay on the bare floor all the afternoon; no orderlies were there; nobody came near me. The soup came up at night—just the same ordinary rations as we got in camp. The soup came up in a wooden tub without a cover, and they had to carry it about half a mile from the cook-house, and it arrived at the hospital full of dust and dirt—at the door of the hospital. The strongest that were able to get it got it, and the weakest lay without. That is a fact. I lay there about three or four days, when some Englishmen volunteered to come down and look after us.

"I took typhus first: when I was in hospital four or five

days, Prime was carried there; he was put down on the floor, and died four or five days afterwards. Sergeant Spence of the Scots Guards was with him when he died. Just before the end they got him a ramshackle bed made up with boards, no mattress.

"The place was a long, narrow hut, whitewashed all over, and about one hundred men in it, absolutely packed, and not more than half a dozen beds at the first. We lay on the floor. There were stoves, but hardly any coal. No one brought in any food. You had to go outside to get it, and the orderly would give you some soup in your basin if you were there. Those not fit to rise from the floor got none unless a comrade brought it to them.

"The French doctors came round, but what could they do? They had nothing to give you, and could do absolutely nothing.

"The Germans had all left the camp as soon as typhus broke out. They built up wooden shoots to put the food down. When parcels from home came they went down the shoot.

"When the beds came in carts they were lifted over the barbed wire. No German came in.

"There were never enough beds, and men were lying on the floor all the time.

"We had nearly 100 deaths a day at one time. The total population of the camp was about 16-17,000, with only about six doctors, French and Russian. Then we had six

British R.A.M.C. doctors—Captain Sutcliffe, Major Fry, Captain Fielding, Captain Vidal, and Mr Lugard. Major Fry, Captain Fielding, and Captain Sutcliffe took the typhus and died. I never got a wash all the time I was there until I was able to go to the tap. There was one fellow, a private in the Gordons, who never had his wound dressed; it was running all the time. He died of pure neglect and typhus. A man died next me with his clothes on, never had them off, even his greatcoat on. Our clothes were running with vermin—millions!

"You could not get dressings or bandages. I have seen men with open wounds who have had to wash their bandages, and hang them up to dry before they could put them on again.

"McDonald volunteered as an orderly in the Typhus Ward, and when he came along he was only one day on duty when he took typhus. He got better, but declined because of the starvation diet. I had him out walking for a little bit up and down, but he was very weak, a living skeleton. He would fall down, and I told him to try and get up and walk a little bit. 'Oh, Jock,' he says, 'I'm no fit.' 'Come on,' I said, 'try.' He got a parcel from home—one from his mother—just before he died. It was just from hunger and neglect.

"Things were getting that bad about the month of April that the Germans began to get a little afraid, and started a

new hospital—about half a dozen of huts. It was isolated from the camp, and we moved there about the beginning of May.

"Things gradually got a little better after that, but January, February, and March were three awful months.

"The Germans did not come back into the camp till the month of August.

"After I was better of the typhus I was back in the same camp. All food was thrown over the barbed wire. Even packets were sent down the shoot. The Germans never came near; you would see them outside the wire. Just before the American Ambassador came there was a new thing for carrying down the food—something like a dustbin with a lid on. The shoot is still there, but is not used. After the Ambassador came we put in a claim, saying we had been passed as unfit for military service, and men who ought to have gone home last August had had it cancelled at the last moment; but we heard no more. The American Ambassador said that must be the Government's fault; he would see about it. He sent us a lot of games. We were only allowed to play games between the huts.

"The camp was run by the Russians, and nobody to look after us. The Germans never came in; you could do what you liked as long as you did not go too near the wire, when they used to sound the alarm. When the alarm sounded at night we had to run into the

park, and if you did not get into the park soon enough they fired at you. They fired one night and killed six Frenchmen. One of the Royal Irish who came up with me had a bullet right past his ear,—I suppose it made him pretty nippy.

"We got no clean clothing or a change. The English were all in rags: you would not know they were soldiers at all to look at them. Just three days before the American Ambassador came, when they heard he was coming, they paraded us all up and looked at our underclothing. We got a shirt and a pair of socks to smarten us up. You could never get hot water; but the day that the American Ambassador came the Germans came round in the morning and told us that if any of us wanted hot water, to send two men out of each room to the cookhouse and get as much boiling water as we wanted. We wondered what was up: we were saying there was something up that day. The Ambassador asked us what clothing we had. He made a great improvement: we got shirts and overcoats, but they took all our overcoats away.

"He asked a lot of men if they had had typhus; he seemed to know all about it. Just previous to that, a Mr Jackson from the American Embassy came. It is wonderful how things got about the camp. This was shortly after the typhus was cleared out, but he did not come into the camp. There were about thirty

yards of space between the wires, and he could not speak to any of us; he just went round. There was a crowd of Germans; but when Mr Gerrard came himself he came into the barrack-room and asked one man a question, then another.

"There was a German who could speak English, but he never came near them. Mr Gerrard seemed to go about the thing very business-like: he was not afraid. He was very keen on getting hold of any man who had been out working and had come in again to camp. Some had not been paid. They were only paid 30 pfennigs (3d.) a day for a hard day's work. The camp was working at a big factory, and you had to get up at 4 in the morning, and they drove you into a big square like a sheep-pen and put all the English together. We called it the Slave Market. They drove you into this pen, and the gangers would come in the morning and take you out. 'I will have you,' and 'You come along with me,'—just like a slave market. We had to get up at 4 and went out at 5. You were put in the slave market at 5.30, and worked from then till 6 at night—and very hard work too. We were working on building a big factory where they were making hand-grenades—very intricate machinery. Nobody seemed to quite know what they were manufacturing there. The men were carrying the stone for

the building. One German who could speak English told one of my chums that the factory was for making hand-grenades.

"They gave out an order that there was to be no smoking in the barrack-room, as the French had refused to allow German prisoners in France to smoke, so they would stop it there. If they caught a man smoking, and they had a stick, he got it. There were no orders printed to tell us what we had or had not to do. They never deliberately tied an Englishman to a post, but I have seen them doing it to Russians, and tying them up to the post. If you did anything that did not please them, you were put in the coal-hole, we used to call it, the place where they get the coal-briquettes from, and kept without food for three days—only bread and water, solitary confinement. Many an Englishman got that. We used to carry down some of our dinner and slip it into them.

"The day the American Ambassador came, Captain Vidal looked well after it, and anything that was done he reported it at once. I think he had been saying something to the American Ambassador, and one of the Germans had overheard it. When the Ambassador went away, he struck Captain Vidal with his sword. We heard that was the reason why Captain Vidal did not come with us, as there was an inquiry about it at the time. Then Major Priestley was in solitary confinement for a while—I don't know what he had done; we

heard that he was found with a revolver, but we could not say. He was isolated away from the officers altogether for close on two months—never saw him. He is back again in camp now. We read in the 'Continental Times' that he was going home on the 3rd September—or August—but some proceedings were being taken against him. It said in the 'Continental Times' misbehaviour—I suppose in looking well after the wounded, or something like that.

"One day we had to pass the German doctor and then went back to barracks. Heard no more until six days afterwards, and the 1st December a German came up about 8 A.M. and formed us up in the barrack-room. Some of those going home had a new shirt given them. A Russian was stopped and told to take off his clogs and give them to that Englishman. Then we went to Aachen. A complaint had been sent to Wittenberg about us; they were kicking up a terrible row for sending us away like that. The officer commanding the camp asked us where we came from. When we said Wittenberg, he said he thought so. We looked such awful sights—filthy; and we were supposed to be dressed coming away. We were very well treated at Aachen—they always do so. Every one was nicer than another, to try and create a good impression. We knew what it was.

"I was sorry for two chaps. One of the London Scottish had been there fourteen months,

and had a bad wound in his leg, and could not move his leg. He was sent back because he was a non-commissioned officer. Another man, a sergeant, with his leg off, could speak Hindustani, and I think that was the reason he was sent back, but I am not sure. His leg was off to the thigh. He was with the Lugard party. A lance-corporal, with his arm off, was also sent back, after thinking he was going to be exchanged. None of the non-commissioned officers got away from that place."

There is a corner of the hospital courtyard where in December the rays of the sun will fall for the space of an hour, illuminating first the big high wall which shuts off light and air from the north-west, then throwing upon the ground itself a triangle of light which gradually broadens, loses shape, and fills at last the narrow passage between the courtyard and the dead garden, but stops short of the broken wooden paling, throwing no cleansing ray on the dismal rubbish-heaps, leaving undisturbed the sepulchral clamminess of the shadows beyond.

In days of peace this corner was surely favoured by the school children. From the high wall to the gable of the main building stretches a single heavy beam, which had perhaps once been painted green, but was now green with the mould of decay. A few rusty rings and hooks, from one of which a piece of sodden rope

still hung, showed to what purpose the beam had served.

The rain, which had been falling steadily, as it seemed, day and night during November, was checked by the first threat of frost, and during the fortnight before Christmas we had bright and cheerful weather. A few convalescent patients were tempted to take a seat in the sun, and came to notice the hour, early in the afternoon, when the triangle of light first strikes the high wall.

We had a bench placed against the wall (it was a very tiny one, and belonged to one of the junior classrooms). Picard, myself, and two French soldiers from Salle un were at first the only *habitués*; none of the British soldiers remaining at the 106 were able to leave their beds, and most of the other Frenchmen were either too weak or too frightened of fresh air to come out and sit in the yard.

It is a common failing of human nature to feel comforted at the sight of other people's misfortune. So it was that the sight of a French soldier who had been shot in the head aroused in me not only the interest of pity, but also, I must confess, a sense of superiority at finding some one worse off than myself. Jean was the name we called him by. No one knew his real name or his regiment, or the place where he was born, or any details of how he had been wounded. His wound in the head was on the left side,

almost exactly in the same place as my own—the bullet had made the same furrow, all the symptoms were identical, the right leg dragging, the right arm hanging, the slow elephantine movement; but there was a difference, said Dr D., between the two points of impact. In the case of Jean the impact of the bullet was a hair's-breadth more to the front of the head, only the difference of perhaps a tenth of a millimetre. And so it was that poor Jean had lost not only the power of motion on the right side, but also speech, memory, and understanding.

All these faculties might return in time (doctors are optimists *par métier*), but at present understanding was limited to questions of the most primitive order—cold and heat, hunger and thirst; speech to a moan which signified no; memory to events of the past forty-eight hours, so that Jean knew nothing of the war, of his regiment, of his home; his face with its dropped jaw and vacant look was already the face of an idiot.

One morning in the refectory Jean fell off his chair on to the floor, grew purple in the face and foamed at the mouth. Urgent messengers flew off to fetch Dr D., and we all thought it was the end of Jean, until my nurse of the Salle cinq suggested epileptic fits, an opinion which was subsequently ratified by the doctor's verdict, "épilepsie Jacksonienne." Jean did not

appear again in the yard until nearly a fortnight after this incident, and his place on the bench in the sun was taken by another whose name, according to his own statement, was "Mahamed, son of Mahamed."

Mahamed was still limping badly from a shot wound in the calf. He did not look more than nineteen, and came from near Oran. His knowledge of French was confined to "*Merci le Madam*," with a shining smile, and "*Alleman grand cochon*."

Mahamed, having discovered my knowledge of a few words of his native tongue and my acquaintance with his native country, followed me about like a shadow. For many months his feelings had perforce been suppressed, and now presuming too greatly on my supposed fluency in Arabic conversation, the poor fellow sat on the little bench in the sun pouring out his story.

We had the story nearly every day, and I began to put bits of it together. Of one thing he was quite certain, namely, that the "*Alleman*" was a pig and son of a pig, and that his other ancestors were of most infamous repute. In the mixed lingo of the bench, the same declaration was made every day at the close of the sitting, when the sun went behind the high wall: "*Alleman no bon, kif kif cochon Yhoudi ben Yhoudi, Sheitan ben Sheitan, Halouf ben Halouf*."

"*Ça c'est tout de même vrai*," said Picard, the one-

legged, patting his stump thoughtfully and pulling vol-canoes of smoke from his clay pipe. "Alleman kif kif cochon." "Le Boche voyez vous," said Picard, addressing the bench party, which was slowly moving back to hospital, "le Boche ça a des petits yeux de cochon, c'est blanc et rose, comme le cochon, ça mange. . . . Ah, les Boches Halouf ben Halouf," and Picard hurriedly finished his discourse out of respect for M. le Vicaire-General, who had just joined the group.

"Bonjour, M. le Vicaire, you're just in time," I said. "Nous disions du mal de notre prochain." "Il n'y a pas de mal à ça, Monsieur le Curé," interrupted Picard, "puisque nous ne parlions que des Boches." "Voyons, M. le Curé," this aggressively, "the Gospel tells us to love our enemies. Do you love the Boches?" This question, and the spirit in which it was asked, was significant of the new atmosphere which had begun to permeate the Salle cinq after the arrival of the French soldier who had declared himself an enemy of fresh air. Gradually this man's evil influence pervaded the whole ward, just as the evil thing he stood for had permeated all France before the war.

M. le Vicaire-General came to the Salle cinq nearly every day, visiting each man's bedside, and no man, except one, however unspiritual his past, could resist the charm of the old priest, in whose smile shone an unselfish soul.

The "enemy of fresh air" was known to the British soldiers in the ward as "Judas Iscariot." When the priest came near his bed, Judas shook his head slightly and smiled an almost imperceptible smile, with all the air of saying, "La religion c'est pour les enfants, les femmes et les imbéciles."

It was some sneer from Judas that prompted Picard's question.

"Voyons, M. le Curé, aimez vous les Boches?"

The old priest looked at the "Picard's" honest troubled face and answered slowly—

"Mais puisque l'évangile nous ordonne de nous aimer les uns les autres et surtout d'aimer nos ennemies, il faut toujours faire son possible pour suivre ce divin conseil et je peux dire que j'aime les Boches—mais—chez eux—pas chez nous."

In Germany, just as in England, Christmas is kept with great feasting and rejoicing, and during the week preceding Christmas M. Vampouille was hard at work making sausages for his German customers, who were to hold a festive meeting at the Kommandatur. Great preparations were also being made at the 106, and the staff of the hospital, forgetting for the time being their private squabbles, joined with our friends in the town in preparing a Merry Christmas.

Christmas morning. Mass at 10 o'clock in Salle un. M. le Vicaire-General preaches a tactful sermon on "resignation." After Mass candles on the Christmas tree are lit and presents distributed.

The altar was erected at the

extreme end of Salle un, and very artistically decorated with palms, laurel branches, and holly; behind the altar were two large flags (home-made) of England and France; on the right was a large Christmas tree.

All patients who were fit to be moved, except Judas Iscariot, were carried up from the Salle cinq and grouped near the altar. In the bed nearest the altar a British reservist lay with a shattered spine, still alive, still conscious, still able to speak, the lower half of his body lifeless since the 26th of August 1914. This was his last week on earth. "Here's a funny kind of Christmas," he whispered; "next Christmas we'll be at home, shan't we?"

On my right, close to the altar steps, sat Picard, beyond him Mahamed ben Mahamed looking puzzled and depressed, and at the end of the row a lady on crutches, dressed in deep mourning, who had lost a leg during the aeroplane fight in September. The other wounded were seated in beds, packed in double row, half-way down each side of the ward, the remainder of which was filled with friends from the town.

Madame Tondeur was busy in the kitchen with three turkeys to roast and carve into very small pieces, so that every one might get a taste. The plum pudding being very small, was reserved for the Salle cinq. Printed directions on the tin suggested that the pudding could be

eaten cold or boiled for "half an hour." Perhaps this was a misprint for "half a day." After the half-hour's boiling, the pudding still seemed to have a compressed appearance, and looked very diminutive under its large stick of holly. Madame Tondeur herself carried the flaming pudding into the Salle cinq, divided it up into twelve portions, the indigestible but fortunately small fragments were duly eaten, and the ancient tradition of Christmas remained for us unbroken.

Between Christmas and the New Year it was decided that my name was to go down on the list of "transportables," and that I would have to join the next party for Germany. Thinking over the last few days spent at the 106 Hospital, I remember first of all the parting words of my nurse: "In days to come try and remember the bright side of your stay here and forget the days of darkness." And here I may say in plain words what I feel most deeply, although these words cannot be read for many months, perhaps years, by those to whom I would wish to address them.

Many a limbless British soldier owes his life to the surgeon of the Civil Hospital. The question in those days was not merely "Will an operation save life?" but rather, "Is there time to operate on those whose lives might be saved?" Dr D. proved himself to be the man for such an emergency. United to great skill, he pos-

sessed great physical strength and powers of resistance to fatigue. For three days and three nights he operated almost without taking time for meals or sleep.

For the devoted kindness of the French doctors and nurses, both of the Hôpital Civil, the 106, and the other ten or twelve hospitals of Cambrai, who for many months under conditions of great difficulty and danger, without many of the most necessary medical appliances, worked night and day to save the lives of British soldiers and to ease the last moments of the mortally wounded, I feel that this very inadequate expression of gratitude must be set down.

There are many other kind friends at Cambrai whose kindness I can never forget.

Consider my situation at Cambrai: unknown, cut off from all intercourse with the world, about to start off for a German prison, and without a sixpence. I did not like to ask a loan from my kind friends, who had already given me a complete outfit of under-

clothing and toilet necessities. On New Year's Day the subject of money was broached by M. Rey in a straightforward business-like manner. "You are shortly going to Germany," he said; "even in prison money is useful; you will need some money; we have brought you some." The sum M. Rey proposed to give me was £50! We decided that half this sum would be ample, and I gave M. Rey a receipt "payable après la guerre."

After these true friends in need had left, M. Vampouille came in to sit with me, and he made the same suggestion about money, and insisted on my accepting a further sum, the loan of which, he said, is granted on one condition only: "You must not pay me by cheque, you must come yourself—after the war!"

Next morning a decrepit omnibus driven by a German soldier came to take me from the Hôpital 106 to M. Brunot's Hôpital Annexe, from where, after three days, I was sent off to Germany.

TWO'S TWO.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

CHAPTER XXI.—THE TELEGRAM.

So little time did Archibald waste either in rounding corners or in passing schools, or in any of the other excuses for sloth to which the ordinary motorist is so apt to succumb, that it was still quite early in the day when they turned off the high-road through a pair of noble gates and sped up a stately avenue between vistas of autumnal parkland.

"This is the place, I suppose?" said Swinby.

"A bit of all right, isn't it?" said Archibald.

The Captain seemed to have become a trifle nervous.

"Almost too much so. I say, hadn't we better get our hair-brushes into our new bags, old chap?"

"Well," admitted Archibald, "I suppose it would lend a little more glamour to our appearance."

The car stopped as suddenly as it did everything else, and the additional glamour was lent.

"I wonder what that carnivorous-minded, stucco-souled blighter of a manager is doing with our evening clothes," said Archibald. "Do you think it would be safe to send him a line signed 'John Smith,' or some other fake, saying that the clothes were really the aforesaid Smith's, but had been boned by Messrs Fitzwyverne

and Swinby, and would the manager please send them to wherever we decide to put up for to-morrow night?"

"No, I do not think it would be safe," replied Swinby emphatically.

"There are merits in the idea all the same."

"I'm dashed if I see any," said Swinby candidly.

"Well," remarked Archibald philosophically, "after all, your evening clothes aren't paid for, so we don't stand to lose much there, and mine are probably getting out of fashion. I've had them nearly a week, and I'd have had to get a new suit very soon anyhow. Hop in, and look as like a Duke as you can; that's the way to impress a mere Marquis."

The car sped on again, and in a few minutes they drew up before a very dignified and moderately large country house.

"What a buck place!" said Swinby in rather an awed voice.

"It needs about fifty more bedrooms," observed Archibald carelessly. "If I were Mount-appleton, I'd want to be a trifle more sociable. Which reminds me that I hope to Heaven I'll have the common-sense to stick to my present good resolutions when I go back to my own place, and rebuild the whole blooming

house on a decent scale. I've never been able to put up more than about fifteen people at a time."

His friend still seemed capable of being surprised by Archibald.

"Your own place!" he exclaimed. "If you've really got a house like that, why in the name of blazes don't we go there?"

"You'd soon get fed up with going in and out of the windows," said Archibald enigmatically, "and sneaking supper out of one's own pantry isn't my idea of bliss, etcetera. Hullo, some one's coming at last!"

The door was thrown open by a refined-looking personage who informed them that his lordship was at home.

"My luck still holds!" said Archibald gleefully. "You can put our bags in our rooms. We are stopping for the night. Look at this tin bloke!"

He rapped a suit of armour so smartly that it emitted a very sonorous clang, extremely disturbing to his friend's nerves, and then as they were passing across the hall towards the library, a tall, thin, dignified-looking gentleman appeared.

"Here he is!" said Archie, "Where's that note? Got it! How are you, Mountappleton? I've got an introduction to you. Read it and see what Providence has sent you."

His Lordship took the note and read this irresistible recommendation—

DEAR MOUNTAPPLETON,—
My cousin Archie Fitzwyverne

and his old pal Captain Jack Swinby are doing a motor tour, and I know it will be doing a favour to both parties to send them to you for a night. Archie is such a huge success everywhere that I can confidently leave you to discover his merits for yourself. Jack also is a ripper.

With love to you all.—Yours ever,

WYVERNE WARRINGTON-BROWNE.

An epistle in verse from his tailor could hardly have surprised Lord Mountappleton more than this sprightly effusion.

"He was either drunk when he wrote it, or we shall hear sad news of poor Warrington-Browne very soon," he said to himself; "I seem to remember hearing that he had an aunt who became a trifle queer."

But here was the introduction—an ominous but undoubted fact—and there stood the two gentlemen who counted on his hospitality on the strength of it. He glanced at them over the notepaper and decided that they were entirely presentable—though the younger seemed eccentric.

In a few well-chosen words he informed them very courteously that he would be delighted to have the pleasure of their company, and was rewarded for his hospitality by a warm and spontaneous eulogy from Archibald.

"Spoken like a sportsman!" pronounced this experienced critic. "I've always liked you—that's to say, I've always known I would like you, and

now I can give you a testimonial anywhere as being one of the best, most deserving, and freest from flies, etcetera, and etcetera! I say, what about a slice of plum-cake and a cherry brandy, or words to that effect? You don't mind my asking, do you?"

His lordship indicated that he had no objections to the request, and while waiting for refreshments Archibald proceeded to make everybody entirely at home.

"This is jolly pleasant!" said he, dropping into an easy-chair. "Sit down, Jack; your nerves require a rest after what has been and passed and gone before. Got many people staying with you, Mountappleton?"

"Not many," said Lord Mountappleton, a little nervously, and looking much less as though the library belonged to him than to Archibald; "in fact, only one or two relatives. My sister——"

"Not Elizabeth!" exclaimed

Archibald. "Forgive me, old bird, for startling you. I mean the beautiful and worthy and all the rest of it, Lady Ellvin."

"She is here," said his host a little stiffly. "Do you know her?"

"Not well enough for her to remember me—passed her in a crowd, that sort of thing," said Archibald carelessly.

Leaning over to his fellow-guest, he whispered—

"A man-eater—beware of her!"

At that moment the butler entered. He carried a tray, and on it was an orange envelope.

"A telegram for Mr Fitzwyverne," he announced politely.

"A telegram for me!" exclaimed Archibald, springing up. "Who the mischief knows I'm here?"

He read the telegram, and his eyes opened very wide.

"Any answer, sir?" inquired the butler.

"No," said Archibald.

CHAPTER XXII.—MAJOR PECKENHAM'S GUEST.

In a panelled room within an old gabled house on the High Street of Sutherbury a man sat writing. At times the pen trembled a little in his grasp, as though he wrote under the influence of strong emotion, and a slight start and an apprehensive glance over his shoulder whenever a sound broke the silence of the old house, suggested a mind decidedly ill at ease. Being a gentleman of exact business

habits, he had already addressed an envelope, and on this was written "Commander G. V. Peckenhams, R.N., H.M.S. *Tempestuous*, China Squadron, Hong-Kong." The letter itself ran—

MY DEAR GEORGE, — Although you have never answered my last, I am writing to you now because I simply must let loose my feelings on some one, and there are reasons

why it mustn't be any one too near. If what I am going to tell you got about, there would be the deuce of a business.

The fact is, the most infernal thing has happened which ever has happened, and I hope ever will happen to me. W.-B. is either off his head or running very far off the rails. A few days ago he pitched me a yarn which I have promised not to repeat, and which you wouldn't believe if I did repeat—no man in his senses would believe it. It finished by a cool request that I should put up two extremely suspicious friends of his, while he disappeared the Lord knows where. I suspect he is abroad, and that there's some woman in the case; anyhow he has gone, and one of these two brutes turned up two nights ago.

What has become of the other I neither know nor care; this one is enough. I knew he was going to be a bad hat before I saw him, but I hadn't the least idea how bad. Do you know what the infernal fellow calls himself? A Reformer! And that sums him up.

He began by turning up about half-past twelve at night, and then slanging me because I remarked it was late. After being infernally rude and ungentlemanly for half an hour on end, he actually proposed to go up to my servants' bedroom and order them to get up at five in the morning! I drew the line there, and he slanged me again.

Since then he has started

battering on my bedroom door at 7 A.M. each morning, and keeping on till I have to get up just to stop the noise. When I do get downstairs I find he has been bullying the cook, and ordering what he calls hygienic meals at new and totally different hours, screwing up my own cellar door to prevent my getting in, and taking down pictures from the walls that he considers frivolous!

The whole time I'm in his company (which has to be practically always, in a small house like this) he is either giving me impertinence on the subject of temperance or some other d——d fad, or telling me to sit perfectly still and not disturb his literary labours. And as to his literary labours, they consist in writing what he is pleased to call *Educative Lectures*—the most putrid stuff I've ever read. He proposes to deliver them in the constituency on W.-B.'s behalf; and as they consist simply of abuse of his audience as a pack of idiots and dissertations on his own fads, you can imagine the effect they will have!

The only thing I can do is to go quietly round the place in my car and make arrangements that every hall in the division is to say it's booked up for the next fortnight, so that if the brute wants to deliver his lectures he will have to do it on a tub in the street. However, he is quite capable of that, unfortunately.

When I add that he has

the impudence to call me by my Christian name, and has ordered a "drink cure" from the chemist's for me, and informs me six times a day that I am in his employment and will get sacked if I don't do this and that and the Lord knows what, you will wonder how I stand it, and why he hasn't been kicked down the front-door steps.

The fact is that I am in the devil of an awkward situation. You know how I stand with W.-B. He very generously created this post for me, gave me £500 a year, and told me I could have the job till I died of old age or got a better one. Still, there it is—the post and its salary are dependent on his pleasure, and he has gone and taken up the most extraordinary attitude about this yarn of his. I've got to pretend to believe it; and it's part of the fraud that I've got to entertain this unspeakable creature Harris, and give him his head and behave to him like a father and pal and banker rolled into one!

At this present moment the brute has gone out for what he calls a constitutional. That's to say, he walks at top speed in one direction for half an hour, and then back again at

top speed. He weighs himself to an ounce before he starts, and when he comes back he has a rub down and then weighs himself again. Then he weighs out the exact amount of digestive biscuits to make up the difference, and eats them. After which he gives me a lecture on the scientific method of keeping fit. At least that's what he did yesterday; and as he started by weighing himself to-day, I presume he means to stick to this pestilential programme every afternoon.

Of all the unspeakable God-forsaken blankers I've ever met in my life, this unmentionable creature lifts the cocoanut every time! If all the blighted Reformers ever pupped were competing, he'd lift it! And if Heaven ever sends the day when I shall have the pleasure of telling him exactly what I think of him, it will be the happiest hour of my life!

What the whole thing means I simply can't make out. I wish to Heaven I had some pal here to confide in. My nerves are getting simply rotten. Good Lord! there's the front door. He's back. I must stop.

Your fed-up and absolutely mystified brother,

MAURICE L. PECKENHAM.

CHAPTER XXIII.—A SUSPICIOUS DEPARTURE.

While Major Peckenham was writing, various other people in Sutherbury were also beginning to feel somewhat seriously concerned. Visitors

to the quiet borough were few, remarkable visitors were fewer still, and a visitor like the gentleman who was at present disturbing the even tenor

of their lives was absolutely unique. That he had come on some secret and highly important (and possibly even sinister) business was evident at a glance.

For the second afternoon in succession they beheld this mysterious individual striding up the High Street at a prodigious pace and with an air of concentrated resolution. From his expression no one could doubt for an instant that he was pondering over some question of momentous and vital importance. He was, in fact, watching with the acutest vigilance and the whole powers of his intellect for the first appearance of perspiration. When that crisis occurred he proposed to stop instantly (as he had done yesterday, to the great edification of the inhabitants), whip off his coat, put on a Shetland wool waistcoat which he carried over his arm, and then resume his coat and his walk with the satisfactory knowledge that his pores were operating freely and yet safely.

Such were his powers of concentration that under ordinary circumstances he would have passed a certain motor-car without noticing it, only it happened to turn down the side street that led to the station, just as Samuel got to the corner. He had perforce to pause till it passed, his austere eyes fell upon it with disapproval, and then he suddenly recognised it as his own.

Gazing sternly into the window, he recognised further Miss Joyce Demayne, remark-

ably smartly attired, and then following the car with the same stern gaze, he noticed on top of it a lady's travelling trunk.

"Something is happening!" said Samuel to himself. "This must be inquired into!"

As the requisite pore exercise could be obtained by going in one direction just as readily as in another, he turned down after the car and strode with knitted brows towards the station.

Unfortunately it was some little distance to go, and fast as he walked he heard with increased disapproval the swelling rumble of the incoming train and then the hissing of steam as it paused at the station. Samuel quickened his stride till he almost ran, he all but reached the station yard, and then with a want of consideration for his wishes which he severely reprobated, the whistle sounded and he saw the train rumble out.

"I shall see that somebody suffers for this!" said Samuel to himself.

Justly indignant though he felt, he did not for a moment allow his feelings to affect his health. The pores were working freely now, so off went his coat and on went the Shetland wool waistcoat. He was just in the act of buttoning it up when he perceived the car beginning to start on its way back.

"Hi!" cried Samuel. "I want to speak to you!"

The chauffeur (his own obedient and well-drilled

Bilson) stared at the severe-looking person making his toilette in the station yard and slowed down as he passed him.

"What's the matter?" he inquired curtly.

"Who was that you ventured to drive to the station?" demanded Samuel with marked displeasure.

"Empress of Chiny," said the chauffeur, who was known among members of his own profession as an accomplished wit; "you one of 'er Chiny images, eh?"

"I dismiss you on the spot!" cried Samuel.

"The worst of them Chiny images," said Mr Bilson to the departing passengers who had paused to hear the controversy, "is the way they get cracked. Ta, ta, old rat-face! If you run 'ard, you'll catch up 'er majesty at the next station!"

The car sped up the street amidst the applause of the spectators, and Samuel put on his coat. His aspect was almost terrifying now. It denoted a purpose, stern and unwavering. He was resolved to get to the bottom of this, and at each stage to mete out punishment to the offenders. Into the station he strode and accosted the polite stationmaster.

"I wish to have a word with you," he said sharply.

At every turn the necessity for regenerating society became more and more apparent to Samuel. This time it was the usual politeness of the stationmaster, which was proved when tested to be a hollow mask hiding a black heart.

"Well, sir," said he very brusquely. "What's the matter?"

Samuel looked at him hard, with relentless, unblinking eyes.

"Miss Demayne departed by this train. Where did she take a ticket for?"

"May I inquire why you are asking?" demanded the stationmaster.

"Because I wish to know."

"In that case," said the stationmaster, "you should have come down sooner and asked the lady herself."

He turned away and walked briskly up the platform.

"Hi, you there!" cried Samuel.

But the stationmaster took no further notice of him.

This confirmation of his verdict on his fellow-men, though undoubtedly gratifying to the prescient intellect which had so confidently assumed the worst, was nevertheless annoying to the Reformer. He was in the midst of some very sombre reflections when he heard an insinuating voice remark—

"Begging your pardon, sir."

Samuel turned his august gaze upon a somewhat dissolute-looking person in the uniform of a porter who had sidled up to him with a knowing air.

"If you are a deserving person, my pardon may conceivably be granted," replied Samuel. "What do you want?"

"I labelled the lady's trunk, sir," said the porter in a low voice, and with a wary glance

towards the stationmaster's back.

"And what was on the label?" demanded Samuel.

"Well, sir," smiled the porter, "it's rather giving things away, ain't it? But to a gentleman as treats one like a gentleman, I don't mind tellin' you—between ourselves—*London* was on the label."

"Are you a liar?" asked Samuel sternly.

"Liar!" exclaimed the porter. "It's the livin' truth, as I'm a——"

"That will do!" interrupted Samuel. "I suspected *London* myself, or I should put no credence in your statement whatever. As it is, let me advise you to continue to tell the truth!"

With these austere words he strode out of the station, leaving behind him another typical instance of man's ingratitude.

Samuel had no doubt now as to what was his duty. Perspiring beautifully, he sped through the town to the gates of Sutherbury Park, and then up the long avenue to the house.

Lady Warrington-Browne was at home, it appeared, and presently the same worthy gentleman who had won her regard before was ushered into the drawing-room. This time she had the additional pleasure of discovering that his name was Mr Harris, while his other virtues remained as prominent as ever. There was no beating about the bush with him: he came straight to the worst and remained there.

"Have you given Miss De-mayne leave to go to London?" he demanded, even before he sat down.

"Certainly not!" she exclaimed. "Has she gone?"

There was something sympathetic about her startled eyes and the indignation which already began to tinge her voice, which pleased Samuel exceedingly. He felt he was in congenial society at last.

"She has gone by the five-twelve train!"

"Are you perfectly sure?" she demanded.

"I saw her!" said Samuel. "She was wearing her best clothes!"

"Gone to London!" repeated the dowager in a voice that was rapidly becoming very terrible indeed. "And without informing me!"

"She has taken her trunk!" said Samuel.

"But how did she get it down to the station?"

"She was in *your* motor-car!" said Samuel, almost smiling by this time.

"I never gave her leave to use any of the cars!"

"Then she took it without asking leave! And Bilson should be dismissed at once. He drove her!"

"I shall see him about this," said the dowager sternly.

"And be sure you sack him," urged Samuel.

"If he has abetted her in any way I shall see that my son dismisses him as soon as he returns."

"Your son?" said Samuel a little doubtfully. "Hadn't you better do it without waiting for

him? The *best part* of him would thoroughly approve."

"You can leave that to me, Mr Harris," replied the dowager with a touch of haughtiness.

There was a suggestion of criticism in her tone which Samuel strongly resented. It was one of his most marked virtues to resent things very swiftly, and display his displeasure very emphatically. On the other hand, he was a man of the greatest concentration of purpose, and he had come there to deal with the flagrant case of Joyce Demayne. So he compromised by fixing an extraordinarily fierce stare upon the old lady, as he answered—

"I should strongly recommend you to take my advice. But the *chief* point is to dismiss Miss Demayne."

Looking nearly as fierce as he, the dowager demanded—

"Have you any idea why she has gone to London?"

"Do you know where your son is?" asked Samuel in a very significant voice.

"He has gone to Paris."

"He *said* he was going to Paris," corrected Samuel.

"What do you know about his movements?" she exclaimed.

Samuel looked exceedingly wise.

"All about *part* of his movements. But about the other part I can only suspect. And I do suspect!"

At that moment he was conscious of a slight feeling of chilliness. He remembered his pores and leapt to his feet.

"For hygienic reasons, I must go," he said hurriedly, "but first let me give you this last piece of advice. Bilson should be sacked, the station-master should be sacked, and especially Miss Demayne should be sacked!"

He strode to the door, and there turned and made his last appeal.

"Save your son from his worst self!" he cried, and with a hasty bow he was gone.

When he returned to Major Peckenhams' house, his host noted a peculiar gleam in his eye, a gleam that appeared to indicate the successful reformation of something. In the process of rubbing down, weighing, and biscuit-eating, it naturally faded somewhat, but there was a little glint still left when at last he condescended to talk.

"Where have you been?" his host inquired.

"I have been to the station," replied Samuel precisely, "where I just missed seeing Miss Demayne depart for London."

"Then she has gone up to town!" exclaimed the Major.

"Is it probable that I should have made that remark if she had *not* gone?" demanded Samuel. "She certainly did go. After that I visited Lady Warrington-Browne."

The Major started.

"You went to the Park! What for?"

"When I think it desirable to explain my movements I shall do so," said Samuel cuttingly.

CHAPTER XXIV.—JOYCE'S RETURN.

The slow train that left Paddington at 8.25 A.M. steamed into Sutherbury, and to the great surprise of the stationmaster and the dissolute-looking porter, Miss Joyce Demayne descended. Rumour spread fast in Sutherbury, and from all they had heard, this young lady's early return had seemed highly improbable. In fact, the local betting had been strongly against her return at all. The very name of the hotel in Paris had been whispered where she and a well-known and hitherto highly respected local magnate were revelling in gilded but unhallowed bliss.

No car from the Park met her at the station. She hired an ordinary fly, her trunk was hoisted up, and she rattled off.

It was a grey chilly morning, the train had left too early for breakfast, and her cab horse exhibited an ungovernable passion for walking. Joyce had a brave heart, but her spirits fell lower and lower and lower. The train journey had been dismal enough, but even more forlorn was this slow perambulation through the almost empty streets, under a sky that threatened sleet, and towards a meeting that threatened trouble.

As for most of the way from the lodge to the house the avenue rose slightly, accordingly for most of the way the horse walked; and all the while a rising wind droned lugubriously, and showers of dead leaves rattled on the roof of the cab. Joyce suddenly

decided that the sooner she left this unhomely place the better, so that whatever the result of the meeting, it mattered not to her.

In this spirit she asked Horrocks (who seemed as surprised at her reappearance as the stationmaster) where Lady Warrington-Browne was to be found, and going straight to the dowager's boudoir, opened the door and walked in.

Lady Warrington-Browne stared at her very hard.

"You are back then!" she exclaimed; and it almost seemed as if there were a shade of disappointment in her voice.

"Yes," said Joyce, "I left town by the 8.25."

"Ah!" said the dowager, collecting her thoughts to deal with this new contingency decisively and adequately.

"A very slow and uncomfortable train," added Joyce.

"Oh," said the dowager, "it was slow, was it—and uncomfortable? I am sorry we cannot provide you with a more luxurious train service, Miss Demayne."

"I don't suggest for a moment it was your fault," replied Joyce with a bright smile and a hardening eye.

"How very good of you!" exclaimed the dowager with exquisite sarcasm.

"Not at all," smiled Joyce; "I always try to be fair."

"And yet not to be impertinent?" asked the dowager, her methods growing a little more direct.

"There is no possibility of

impertinence," said Joyce, still smiling brightly, "when one is always anticipated."

Lady Warrington - Browne decided to stop skirmishing and come to close action.

"Why did you go up to town without informing me?" she demanded.

"I simply followed what I thought were Sir Wyverne's directions."

"What you thought! What do you mean?"

"I had better tell you the whole story," said Joyce.

"You had!" agreed the dowager.

Joyce sat down and gave her a brief and candid account of Mr Fitzwyverne's scheme for securing her company at the Chic, and of her discovery of his perfidy and immediate return.

Lady Warrington - Browne listened with a hostile eye and no other expression on her face.

"Miss Demayne," she pronounced at the end of the story, "if your extraordinary tale is correct, you have deceived me and compromised yourself. But I do not believe a word of it!"

"You mean that I have neither deceived you nor compromised myself?"

"I mean that by your own account you took my motor-car——"

"Sir Wyverne's," corrected Joyce.

"It is all the same!"

"Then let us say I took one of Sir Wyverne's cars."

"You took *my* car!" thundered the dowager, "and you went up to town and spent the night at an hotel with a young man!"

"This professes to be my own account?"

"It is your own account!"

"But you have just told me you disbelieved it."

"I believe parts of it!"

"Which you select as charitably as possible?"

"As charitably as I find it possible."

"That is very nice and frank of you," said Joyce.

The old lady stared at her.

"Will you kindly explain your meaning a little more clearly, Miss Demayne."

"I mean that it isn't every one who would confess that their charity was so deficient."

For a moment Lady Warrington-Browne seemed to be seeking for an adequate expression for her emotions. Finally it took the simple form of—

"Leave my house instantly!"

Any sound reformer would no doubt have considered it a sign of a peculiarly unregenerate nature that Joyce, who so lately had desired nothing better than an opportunity for leaving, should at once decide to remain.

"Whose house?" she inquired with an air of surprise.

"My son's and my house!"

"I should be very happy to leave yours if I knew where it was," said Joyce quite politely. "But of course Sutherbury Park is Sir Wyverne's, and as I was engaged by him I am afraid I must wait till he terminates our engagement himself."

At this reply the dowager unfortunately committed herself to an insinuation as to

Miss Demayne's character too libellous for publication.

With a very white face Joyce sprang up, and her voice quivered a little.

"I should never dream of spending another hour under the same roof with you!" she cried. "I shall be ready to go in half an hour if you will have the car at the door then."

Even Lady Warrington-Browne seemed a trifle perturbed at her own speech and its results. Her eye still remained hard, but she only replied hurriedly—

"Very well, the car will be at the door."

In half an hour Joyce shook the dust of Sutherbury Park off her feet and sped down the avenue again.

But as she neared the lodge gates she began to reflect. Righteous though her anger might be, this was clearly desertion of her post, and without giving Sir Wyverne a word of warning. She thought rapidly, and then as they were entering the town she put her head out of the window and said—

"Drive first to Major Peckenham's!"

At the house in the High Street she told the car to wait, and rang the bell. The Major was in, and received her in the dining-room. He seemed particularly glad—almost relieved, she thought—to see her, and yet his manner was distinctly distracted.

"Sorry my smoking-room's occupied by a man who's staying with me," he said apologetically. "But do sit down. Anything the matter?"

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"I have left Sutherbury Park," said Joyce.

"Left!" he exclaimed. "Do you mean for good?"

She nodded.

"But what's happened?"

She told him briefly.

"What an infernal shame!" he cried. "Some one's been slandering you—that's what happened!"

"Who?" she asked.

"H'm," said he, "I think I can guess."

"Well," said Joyce, "there is no excuse for Lady Warrington-Browne anyhow, and it's impossible for me to stay in the house with her. At the same time, I feel I can't leave Sir Wyverne in the lurch without even telling him I am going. You don't know his address?"

He shook his head.

"That's the worst of it," said he.

"Then what do you advise? I was wondering whether I should take rooms in Sutherbury and wait till Sir Wyverne——"

She broke off abruptly and listened for a moment.

"There's some one outside the door!" she exclaimed.

There certainly seemed to be a distinct sound of footsteps hurrying away.

The Major opened the door and looked out. He saw no one in the passage, but he noticed that the smoking-room door was not quite shut. A look came into his eye which it would have been well for the Reformer to have seen and reflected on.

"I don't see any one," he

said, coming back. "But as to your taking rooms, I think it's an excellent scheme. In fact I can put you on to the very thing you want. Try Number Seventy-nine High Street."

They went out together, and he saw her into the car. Just as she seated herself, her glance happened to travel over the Major's shoulder and fall upon the dining-room window,

and there she saw a face. It only remained at the window for a moment; but she had time to note that it was a singularly bleak, severe, and ungenial countenance, with eyes that were criticism itself.

"What an unpleasant-looking person the Major's friend is!" she said to herself as she drove away.

But thus have all great reformers been misunderstood.

CHAPTER XXV.—MAJOR PECKENHAM DOES HIS DUTY.

Major Peckenham returned to his smoking-room with a very preoccupied air. From his eye he seemed to have inspirations towards action, and to judge from his mouth they required considerable repression.

"I want to speak to you, Maurice," said Samuel sternly.

"Well?" demanded the Major briefly.

"You have been visited by Miss Demayne!"

The Major nodded.

"I heard what she said to you!"

The Major opened his eyes.

"I thought you were eaves-dropping," he exclaimed; "but do you mean to say you aren't ashamed of it!"

"Ashamed!" cried the Reformer. "It was my *duty* to discover her machinations!"

"Then I suppose it was your duty to spy on her movements, and go to Lady Warrington-Browne with your poisonous insinuations?" inquired the Major with ominous calm.

"Everything I do is my duty," replied Samuel aus-

terely. "And now you have got to do yours!"

"And may I ask what that is?"

"You are to turn her out of Sutherbury immediately!"

Major Peckenham drew himself up to his full height, and an impression at once terrible and beatific overspread his face. He felt that the happiest hour of his life had come.

"You damned, miserable, pestilential swine!" he thundered. "You have the impudence to ask me to assist you in persecuting that beautiful and virtuous young lady? By Heaven, this is the last straw! I have endured, sir, your filthy habits of rising at a God-forsaken hour, and deranging my meals, and rubbing yourself with a damned towel! I have read the putrid ebullitions which you are pleased to call your lectures! I have supplied you with enough milk and biscuits to feed a reformatory; and let me tell you, sir, the more you eat of them, the more like a dashed jail-bird you become! I have stood

your drivel, sir, and your impertinence, sir, and your snivelling, offensive appearance, sir, till I can stand them no longer! And now you stick your dashed eye to my dashed keyhole, and then have the effrontery to tell me to do my duty! By God, sir, I shall do it too!"

The gallant officer paused, but clearly only to take breath. In the pause the startled Reformer managed to interject one nervous sentence.

"Maurice!" he cried, "d—d—don't you realise who you are talking to?"

"Perfectly!" thundered the Major. "I am talking to a misbegotten, reforming, tale-bearing tripe-hound—that is what I am talking to! And in so talking, sir—calmly and reasonably, but with a plain soldier's frankness—I thank Heaven I have the satisfaction of doing my duty! My duty," added the Major with a touch of reverberating reverence, "to my Sovereign, sir, and to Society!"

"You—you—you are mad!" cried Samuel, his voice rising almost to a squeal.

"Mad, sir?" replied the Major, advancing a step towards him, with a menacing air. "Kindly repeat that expression!"

"B—b—but," stammered Samuel, "I am Wyverne! I am your own employer! I pay you your——"

Major Peckenham cut him short.

"Do you actually imagine that I am such a mutton-headed fool as to believe that preposterous story? Why Sir Wyverne selected me as a

victim for this practical joke I do not profess to know. If it was to try my patience, well, sir, you can return to him and inform him how my patience has stood the experiment! Or if by any chance you have some power or hold over my unfortunate friend, you can inform him that I recommend a horse-whip to abate the nuisance, and that I shall have much pleasure in applying the remedy myself!"

As he heard this dreadful disclosure, a glimmering of painful consequences began to dawn upon Samuel. It had been one of his most complacent reflections that in the division of Sir Wyverne the handicap of Imagination had been given to Archibald and not to him, and except for one fleeting moment on his first evening it had never occurred to him that he stood to lose anything by a difference with the Major. And only now did he begin dimly to perceive exactly how awkward the situation might be. He made a conscientious effort to repair the breach.

"You—you must of course apologise, Maurice," he began, "and then perhaps——"

"I give you ten minutes to pack your bag and get out of this house!" interrupted the Major, "and if you have the impudence to address me by my Christian name again, out you go without your bag!"

"Leave your house?" wailed Samuel. "But—but where can I go——?"

"To the devil!" thundered the Major. "Come on! Right turn! Out of that door and

up to your room and pack! And then down my front-door steps you'll dashed well double! If you're ready in ten minutes you can walk out; if you take one fraction of a second longer I'll kick you out! And I hope to Heaven you do take longer!"

"I — I won't!" shouted Samuel with a sudden outburst of the true reformer's obstinacy.

A sudden smile gleamed in the Major's eye.

"By gad, I'll have the pleasure of kicking you *upstairs* anyhow!" he cried; and seizing Samuel by the collar he shot him through the door, and the next moment the Reformer found himself on his hands and knees on the stairs.

"The next kick should send you nearly to the top," prophesied the Major; but Samuel anticipated the forecast. He reached the top unassisted, and

with the speed of a bolting rabbit.

In eight minutes he and his bag descended, and as the Major slammed the door behind him, he heaved a little sigh of disappointment.

"However," he reflected complacently, "I have done my duty—and by Heaven I have enjoyed doing it!"

Meanwhile the inhabitants of Sutherbury were enjoying another glimpse of their mysterious visitor; only to-day he carried a handbag and was walking, as it were, less confidently. It might have been the weight of the bag, but certainly his gait seemed to have a kind of shuffle in it. As he turned down the street that led to the station, they concluded that they were probably going to lose him.

This conclusion was correct.

CHAPTER XXVI.—WARRINGTON HOSTEL.

Sir Wyverne's maternal grandfather was no less eminent a person than Horatius Warrington, the famous philanthropist (of whose virtues Samuel was no doubt the result); and it was in commemoration of Horatius and his praiseworthy efforts that Warrington Hostel, that spark of culture in the magazine of East London, was built, named, and provided with a complete outfit of high-minded gentlemen of strenuous tendencies.

The Hostel enjoyed every advantage. Nothing that could happen to the surrounding streets and their inhabitants could fail to be advantageous,

so that any bad result from its enterprises was impossible. An academic air pervaded its courtyard and buildings and the contained philanthropists, which could not leave even the Houndsditch feather-weight favourite unaffected, should he happen to call. And as an inducement to call, there was a first-class magic lantern, a course of lectures on Sicilian antiquities, and another on medieval craftsmen and their pottery, and an annual Christmas Tree.

The Warden of this ideal settlement was the Reverend Jocelyn Pyeman, one of the best known and most widely

respected authorities on the Education of the Future, while most of the other philanthropists were experts in something equally practical. In short, it was an institution which never failed to impress the cultured visitor with the conviction that it must be going to achieve something very remarkable sooner or later.

Naturally the grandson of Horatius Warrington was a specially welcome guest. For a number of years Sir Wyverne had been in the habit of quitting the world for a night or so and refreshing himself in the stimulating atmosphere of the Hostel; and the results of stimulating the baronet successfully were found to be so satisfactory that the Reverend Jocelyn made a point of keeping a selection of his most progressive ideas against his visits, and the baronet a practice of taking his cheque-book with him on these occasions.

For some time past, however, there had been a hiatus in Sir Wyverne's visits. In fact, it must have been some considerable time since he last stayed with the philanthropists, for the Rev. Jocelyn remembered that he was then on the point of engaging a lady secretary, and that was a year ago or more. It was only Mr Spink, a philanthropist with a caustic turn, who had ventured to suggest any connection between the two facts; but even the unworldly Jocelyn agreed that another visit was overdue.

It was, therefore, with a great sense of relief and of

pleasure that this devoted community received one morning the following telegram from the baronet:—

Kindly welcome Samuel Harris philanthropist and reformer arriving to-day and representing me. Please show every attention.

WYVERNE WARRINGTON-BROWNE.

A spare bedroom was instantly prepared for this distinguished visitor, and a special plum-cake ordered for tea, while, as was usual when they expected the baronet himself, an extra course was added to their plain-living and high-thinking dinner. For Sir Wyverne was generally reported to be fond of good cheer.

In the course of the afternoon Mr Harris arrived, and at the first glance the philanthropists recognised him as a reformer of the proper breed. Nothing of the half-measure man about him! His tight-shut mouth, his protruding chin, and his austere eyes proclaimed his vocation instantly. Even had he not been kicked upstairs that morning, and subsequently found himself condemned to travel by the slowest train of the day, he would have been impressive. As it was, he was awe-inspiring.

His reply to the Warden's cordial greeting was curt, but then really good men are apt to despise the flummeries of a decadent civilisation. He was presented to Mr Spink, the caustic philanthropist, a lean gentleman with a beard; to

Mr Jollins, an enthusiastic philanthropist, less lean and with only a moustache; and to several other strenuous devotees. Upon all he produced the same impression—the impression of a man who, when the words of wisdom once began to fall from his lips, would prove a very rousing visitor indeed.

But at first Samuel was unwontedly silent. For one thing he was still in an extremely fine temper (fine in the reforming sense—that is to say, somewhat volcanic); and he also felt for a few minutes a trifle embarrassed. Every one of these gentlemen he knew perfectly well already, and it was a little difficult for a vigorously honest Reformer to greet them as strangers. Samuel compromised by adopting a manner which might have implied that they were his bitterest enemies.

Instead of damping the phil-

anthropists' ardour, this served rather to increase it, for it seemed to show conclusively that their guest stood on a pinnacle high above even that lofty level to which they had attained themselves.

"He makes me feel abashed!" said Mr Jollins enthusiastically.

"He makes me feel a trifle suicidal," replied Mr Spink.

"Do you mean really or metaphorically?" inquired Mr Jollins anxiously.

"Metaphorically, at present," said Mr Spink darkly, "but I suspect my spirits are going to fall lower still."

As a whispered legend reported that Mr Spink had originally been driven to philanthropy by an unfortunate love affair, his fellow-workers always made allowances for his speeches, and with undiminished reverence they followed their ascetic visitor into the dining-hall.

CHAPTER XXVII.—THE DISTINGUISHED VISITOR.

In the dining-hall, a spacious but chaste apartment, adorned only by a bust of the eminent Horatius, the party sat down to tea.

Samuel drank two cups and ate six slices of bread and butter in almost complete silence. Then they offered him the plum-cake, and the first words of wisdom were heard.

"I do not approve of plum-cake in an institution devoted to philanthropic purposes," said the distinguished visitor severely, waving away the cake with a disdainful gesture.

Though a little startled, the Warden endeavoured to carry off the situation with a smile.

"The plum-cake is a relaxation in our habits, which we only permit for the benefit of a guest," said he.

"It is a pernicious habit to relax anything," said Samuel. "I never relax!"

"We required this example," remarked Mr Spink in his caustic voice: at the same time cutting himself a large slice of cake.

"You require a good many examples," retorted Samuel;

and to give this repartee still more force, he added with his sternest look, "all of you!"

The Rev. Jocelyn still endeavoured to be pleasant.

"I am sadly aware of my own deficiencies," he confessed with an amiable smile.

"You are not," replied Samuel, with considerable heat, "and I propose to tell you what your deficiencies are. You are unpractical, you are muddle-headed, you do as much good with the cheques for £100 which I send you as I could do with a penny—less, in fact."

"The cheques *you* send!" exclaimed Mr Spink.

"I mean the cheques that Sir Wyverne sends," said Samuel, turning on Mr Spink with the alacrity of a terrier, "as you ought to have known if you had a fraction of the brains you think you have."

The kindly Warden had by this time begun to suspect that some untoward incident must have occurred to disturb the equilibrium of a visitor so well introduced and of so exemplary an appearance.

Very tactfully he suggested that if Mr Harris desired no more tea he would be happy to show him round the Hostel.

"I do desire more tea," said Samuel, "but I not believe in swilling for gluttony's sake."

With a terrific look at Mr Jollins, who was just having his cup refilled, he stalked out, followed by the Rev. Jocelyn.

A denunciation of the careless world outside the strenuous Hostel had been confidently expected. Indeed a person of Samuel's appearance who uttered mere beatitudes would

be somewhat like a 12-inch gun which squirted scent. But the philanthropists scarcely anticipated that the denunciation would be discharged at themselves.

Samuel, in fact, left behind him an impression which may best be described as unfortunate, for such a conjunction of essentially kindred spirits occurs so seldom that it seems a thousand pities that one of the spirits should have been a trifle unsympathetic on this of all days.

Even the gentle Jocelyn, who had never hurt a fly in his life, and whose only conception, in fact, of how to hurt it would have been to form an amiable Fly Reformation Society and spend an odd thousand pounds or so on preliminary inquiries as to the kindest way, had to confess at the end of their tour round the Hostel that Mr Harris was exhausting company. He seemed, indeed, a little depressed as the result of his distinguished guest's society; and by the time the philanthropists assembled at dinner, the distinguished guest himself was the only member of the party who appeared thoroughly satisfied with the afternoon.

Samuel had undoubtedly improved in spirits since his arrival. It was only at one spot that a certain stiffness reminded him of the morning's tragedy, and everything else seemed to be in a conspiracy to please. The Warden was clearly created to be rebuked: he had so many inviting defects, and took his

chastisement in such an ideal spirit. And now here were fourteen more philanthropists awaiting their turn. Samuel counted them carefully, and decided that their reformations would make a very pleasant evening's work. He looked forward particularly to the prospect of Samuelising the caustic Mr Spink; and as he found himself placed exactly opposite to that gentleman, with only the Warden (now very silent) at the head of the table between them, he realised more and more how sensibly Providence was behaving.

Mr Spink's dissolute custom of drinking a glass of beer with his dinner led naturally to a trenchant exposure of the horrors of alcoholism, with Mr Spink as text. The extra course led equally naturally to a monologue on extravagance, and Mr Spink again found himself introduced as text. Mr Spink's habit of crumbling his bread gave a very obvious opening for a lecture on waste, and once more Mr Spink served as text. And then, just as Samuel was in the full tide of reformation, the Rev. Jocelyn had the ill taste to intervene.

"I think, Mr Harris," he said, "that you are unduly severe."

This was an excessively strong statement for the Warden, and retribution was swift.

"I should request you to mind your own business, Mr Pyeman," said Samuel with his sternest look, "if you were capable of doing so. Permit me to repeat a few of the observations on your incompetence which I made to you before dinner."

It was at that moment that Mr Spink rose, and without apology or explanation left the table. Mr Jollins hailed him in a whisper as he passed behind him.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"Warrington - Browne has sent this person here," replied Mr Spink, "and I am going to request him to remove him."

"But how——" began Jollins.

"Sutherbury Park is on the telephone," said Spink, and strode out of the room.

About a quarter of an hour passed during which Samuel was at his best, and then with a very strange look on his face Mr Spink returned. He touched the Warden on the shoulder and said in a low voice—

"I want to speak to you at once."

The Warden rose and they left the room together. As he passed the distinguished guest, Mr Spink's eye lit on him for a moment. It had a very peculiar gleam in it: an unphilanthropic gleam, in fact.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE OTHER CANVAS BAG.

Ten minutes passed, during which the surviving philanthropists were handled very

briskly indeed by Samuel; and then the Warden and Mr Spink re-entered. The Rev. Jocelyn

looked exceedingly grave, and the gleam in Mr Spink's eye was even less altruistic than before. Behind them, to the surprise of the others, the door was left ajar, and a glimpse was distinctly seen of Fawkes, the porter (*né* the Bethnal Bruiser, and a great credit to the ameliorating influences of the Hostel, but not a gentleman usually introduced at dinner).

The philanthropists nearest the door overheard a snatch of conversation which roused their interest to the highest pitch.

"I wish you would deal with him yourself, Spink," said the Warden in a low anxious voice.

"With pleasure," replied Mr Spink in a tone that showed he really meant what he said. "Could you let me have the telegram in that case?"

The Warden handed him a telegram, and they advanced together to the head of the table.

The distinguished guest was speaking—very loudly and emphatically.

"I have always considered you a pretentious lot of dilettantes," he was saying. "You do about as much good as a set of butter-knives——"

At this point Mr Spink spoke.

"Excuse me, Mr Harris," said he, "but I think you sent us a telegram this morning."

Samuel's very honesty was his undoing. He walked straight into the trap.

"I did," he replied.

Mr Spink opened his eyes.

"You admit it, then!" he exclaimed.

"Did you imagine I would

deny it?" replied Samuel, his eye kindling with the light of battle. "If you did, you are even——"

Again Mr Spink interrupted.

"This telegram professes to have been sent by Sir Wyverne Warrington-Brewne."

For a moment the distinguished guest was evidently disconcerted.

Then he snapped—

"Well, so it was. When I said *I* sent it, of course I meant *he* sent it, as you ought to have known if you weren't——"

Mr Spink cut in again.

"Then you now say that this wire was sent by Sir Wyverne *from Sutherbury* this morning?"

"I made no statement as to where it was sent from."

"The post office people usually make a statement, however," said Mr Spink drily. "This wire was handed in at the Sutherbury telegraph office."

"Then naturally it was sent from there," said Samuel.

"I have just telephoned to Sutherbury Park," said Mr Spink, letting each word sink in as he spoke it, "and I learn that Sir Wyverne has been away from home for several days. In fact, he is abroad and cannot possibly have despatched this wire!"

Such a profound sensation had never been caused at Warrington Hostel since its foundation-stone was laid.

As for Samuel, he spoke not a word for the better part of a minute. The light of battle was gone from his eye, and it no longer even tried to meet

the stern and wondering looks of his hosts. Had they but known it, he was actually engaged in giving this same Sir Wyverne the severest rating he had ever endured. Of all incompetent arrangements, his were the very worst, thought his better half bitterly. Then he heard the gentle voice of the Warden speaking; only it was nothing like as gentle as usual.

"Well, what have you got to say for yourself?" it demanded.

Without actually envying Archibald his unsanctified share of the baronet, Samuel did wish that he had inherited a little of the resource necessary for meeting these embarrassing contingencies.

He saw positively nothing for it but the truth; or rather, a few judicious excerpts from the truth—a truthlet or two, so to speak.

"I *am* Sir Wyverne," he announced.

The dead silence in which this startling statement was received greatly encouraged Samuel. He decided to give them just one more snippet, and leave it at that.

"By means of a chemical experiment he got rid of the worst part of himself, and I am the rest."

Mr Spink spoke, and his voice seemed to Samuel a little peculiar.

"Then you are the best part of Sir Wyverne?" he inquired.

For some reason there was a tendency among the other philanthropists to laugh at this inquiry.

"I am," replied Samuel emphatically; and the tendency was even more pronounced.

The Rev. Jocelyn, Mr Spink, and Mr Jollins conferred apart for a moment. Mr Spink seemed to be urging a course of action upon the Warden, and Mr Jollins to be cordially approving. Then the Warden, after a moment's vague indecision, nodded his head, and Mr Spink instantly beckoned to the porter.

"Fawkes!" he cried; and the ex-bruiser marched up the room.

"Take charge of this gentleman for the night," said Mr Spink. "We shall inquire tomorrow what asylum he has escaped from, but in the meantime you had better look him up in his room and see that he doesn't do any damage to himself or any one else. Of course you will make quite sure that he can't escape."

"Trust me, sir!" said Fawkes with an automatic wink (a by-product of his unregenerate days).

The scuffle that ensued was brief, and the language used by Samuel in the course of it entirely confirmed the Hostel in its new view of its distinguished visitor. And then Samuel found himself behind a locked door in a small bedroom, with his razors carefully removed.

The first emotions even of a great philosopher when stricken by sudden adversity are probably rather more violent than one is led to suppose from his biography. Samuel's certainly were both acute and forcibly

expressed; so forcibly, in fact, that his boots had to be removed, in addition to his razors.

But after this first pardonable outburst, philosophy came back to her own, and presently the stocking-soled recluse was setting industriously about the business of improving the shining hour, even in captivity. A really brilliant idea presented itself practically at the first time of asking. He would write a letter to 'The Times'! It should be a long letter—say three columns and a half; it should give in minute detail his verdict on Warrington Hostel; and it should finish with a demand, irresistible by all reasonable readers, that he should be appointed Warden, and the Rev. Jocelyn and Mr Spink incarcerated in his stead.

He had writing materials in his suit-case, and as he had fortunately taken out his hair-brushes and razors before dinner and then locked the case, it had not been interfered with. Accordingly he unlocked it again, snatched up a few sheets of paper and a fountain-pen, and in a mere matter of seconds had written "Dear sir," and an introductory paragraph or two besides.

Just at that point the vigilant Fawkes decided to have another look at his charge, and unlocking the door, came in. On his face was the true jailer's frown, and his bearing suggested a striking compound of strength and virtue. And then his eye chanced to fall on the still open suit-case.

After one chilling glance over his shoulder at the intruder, Samuel resumed his letter with unabated vigour. Paragraph after paragraph of the strongest nature leapt upon the paper, and all the while behind his back the ex-Bethnal Bruiser stood contemplating the suit-case. Distinctly visible in one corner of it was a plump little canvas bag—a bag the nature of whose contents could hardly be mistaken by a gentleman with any experience whatever of the world, and curiously enough it was on this particular corner that Mr Fawkes's gaze was riveted.

At last he moved, but very quietly. On tiptoe he went back to the door, looked carefully out and listened breathlessly, and then he shut the door again gently and returned to the Reformer.

A peculiar cough behind his back disturbed Samuel. He turned and looked severely at his jailer.

"I must trouble you not to cough quite so near me," he said sharply.

Mr Fawkes smiled a bland insinuating smile.

"'Ard luck, guv'nor," said he in a deeply sympathetic voice.

So poignantly was his sympathy expressed that for a moment Samuel misunderstood the emotion.

"You are maudlin," he said severely. "You have had a glass of some degrading fluid. Go away!"

"I ain't touched a drop, sir—not a drop," said Mr Fawkes reproachfully. "And it's 'ard,

sir—it's 'ard—to 'ear a gentleman insinuate!"

"I am relieved to hear you are sober," said Samuel. "But what do you want?"

Mr Fawkes came a step nearer and lowered his voice.

"Do you want to get out?"

"Certainly I want to get out!" said Samuel.

"I was just a-wondering," whispered Mr Fawkes, with a significant wink.

"That proves you are a blockhead," pronounced Samuel emphatically. "You should have *known* I wanted to get out."

The amiable Fawkes refused to be offended.

"I can manage it for yer!" said he.

"Very well," said Samuel, "bring me my boots and I'll come immediately."

"If it were made worth my while, guv'nor," added Mr Fawkes.

"Of course it is worth your while," said Samuel. "You will be rendering a valuable service to society."

Possibly porters who live long enough in an altruistic atmosphere become immune. The ex-Bruiser merely smiled a peculiarly worldly and sagacious smile.

"There's a little canvas bag in that there suit-case!" said he.

"Do you suppose I am unaware of that?" demanded Samuel. "It contains my money."

This information did not seem to surprise Mr Fawkes in the least. He looked at the

bag with a sympathetic eye and suggested delicately—

"Sov'rins is the better for a bit o' thinnin' out, guv'nor. It keeps them 'ealthy."

"I disagree with you entirely," replied Samuel. "You have acquired that superstition from some ignorant person. Hair requires thinning and trees require thinning, but certainly not sovereigns."

For the first time Mr Fawkes began to look a little disgusted.

"Lord lumme!" he exclaimed. "What are you gettin' at? If you gives me a tenner, I lets you out—and cheap at the price I calls it! Do you understand *that*?"

"You suggest bribery!" cried Samuel, springing up with an expression of virtuous indignation.

"You can call it any bloomin' fancy name you like," said Mr Fawkes indulgently, "but that's what I *do* suggest."

"I shall report you to the proper authorities to-morrow morning. You are a very bad, unscrupulous man. Go away instantly!" said Samuel, already resuming his seat and feeling for his pen.

The ex-Bethnal Bruiser felt that he had reached the limits of a plain man's patience.

"Of all the blank, blank ingratitude!" he cried, though still in a hoarsely muffled voice. "'Ere I might have lifted that little lot and you never noticed what 'ad 'appened to it! And instead of that, what does I do? Makes you a sportin' offer and only asks a tenner! A tenner for lettin' loose a bloomin' dangerous

lunatic! I oughter've charged a 'undred quid! 'Owever, if you won't take your chance, I takes mine."

And with that he hurried to the suit-case, picked up the little canvas bag and stuffed it in his pocket, and the next moment he was gone and the key clicked in the lock.

The din made by the Reformer in the next five minutes brought Mr Spink, Mr Jollins, and the jailer at a run. They paused just inside the door and stood there in a wary attitude, for their prisoner was evidently in an extremely violent mood.

"He has robbed me! He has taken all my money!" shouted Samuel, pointing an accusing finger. "He wanted me to bribe him, and I refused! And then he robbed me! I give him in charge!"

Mr Fawkes shook his head, and smiled indulgently.

"A bad attack, sir," he remarked to Mr Spink.

"Do you actually deny it?" exclaimed the Reformer with a horrified stare.

"Do you mean he took your purse?" asked Mr Jollins, a simple soul who hardly realised how a mind deranged can wander from the facts.

"It was in a bag—nearly two hundred pounds in gold! Arrest him—send for the police!" cried Samuel.

Mr Fawkes, who had had no time to inspect his prize, opened his eyes very wide for

one instant, and then banished all expression from his face.

"A bag containing nearly two hundred pounds!" said Mr Spink. "I need hardly ask you, Fawkes, whether you observed this remarkable treasure?"

Fawkes shook his head again, very emphatically this time, yet with a trace of genial humour.

"'Is razors, sir, I've 'ad to remove, and 'is boots; but neither canvas bags nor blue rats."

"If you make a row again, we'll have to strap you up," said Mr Spink. "See that he keeps quiet, Fawkes."

They departed, and the philosopher was left to philosophise. His ruminations were sombre. In his pockets was the sum of seventeen shillings and sixpence in silver and coppers; he saw no conceivable possibility of obtaining any more; and his mission of regenerating society had ended in a locked bedroom. Gravely as he disapproved of Sir Wyverne, the vanished baronet seemed his only refuge now.

"There is nothing else for it," he said to himself bitterly. "I must reunite with that unspeakable Archibald!"

And then a fresh calamity almost overwhelmed him. Where was Archibald? It occurred to him for the first time that he had received no word of any address.

(To be continued.)

THE UNITED STATES AS A NEUTRAL.

IN view of the present position of the United States as a neutral, dissatisfied, as neutrals are apt to be, not only with one but with both belligerent parties' methods, a good deal of attention has been directed to the War of Secession. In that, the North stretched the doctrine of continuous voyage as applied to contraband a good deal further than it had been stretched before, and this has furnished two convenient lines of argument when the States, now neutral, wish, as neutrals always do, to restrict belligerent captures at sea. We have been able to say either "But you did just the same yourself," or "This is only the natural enlargement of what you did: circumstances, places, and conditions have changed somewhat in the course and progress of time—but the principle is the same." And both these arguments are in the main valid and hard to answer. Luckily our Government did not, in the 'sixties, enter any formal protest against these "novel" American doctrines. The publicists and authorities on International Law, both British and Continental, did raise their voices against them—almost in unison for once in a way—but our Government "lay low and warn't sayin' nuthin'." Doubtless Germany now attributes this to our usual perfidious Brer Fox-like cunning. One wonders if it was in

reality anything more than the Tar-Babyish policy of inaction. Anyhow, we realise now that it was mighty fortunate.

Yet though many eyes have been turned on the 'sixties, less attention has been given in this connection to the time of Napoleon. We have certainly regarded that as our latest precedent of a European convulsion; it has been instanced as giving examples of commercial blockade and the influence of sea-power. The parallel, or perhaps it were better to say the likeness, has been drawn that then, too, the neutrals were mostly the same as to-day, the United States, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. But this unpleasing fact is often left on one side, namely, that the United States in the end abandoned neutrality for war, and that when they fought they went to war with the power supreme at sea among the belligerents—Great Britain.

At first sight there is an explanation for this which is wide of to-day. The United States, we say, were then naturally friendly with our enemy France, since France had helped them to win independence: they as a Republic would of course sympathise with Republican France: the old sore between them and England was still raw: George III. was still on the throne: no wonder then that they took sides against us.

But though the facts are true, the inference will not hold water. The war began in 1793: the first French Republic ended in 1804. The United States did not come in till 1812. They cannot have waited (even making the utmost allowance for exchange of diplomatic notes) nineteen years before they acted out of "natural" hostility to Great Britain and "natural" sympathy with France; they did not join in order to help republican brethren eight years after those brethren had ceased to be republican. Doubtless they did not love Great Britain for what had happened from 1775 till 1782—but they cannot have taken nineteen years to become convinced of this. Some weight must be given to the anti-British feelings of the United States in Napoleon's time, but not much. By themselves they would never have led to war.

More particular causes of quarrel, however, are commonly set forth. These are two: the first, the British claim to impress British seamen from American merchant-ships; and the second, the series of restrictions upon American commerce arising out of the Continental System,—these, it is said, were the chief causes of war. And a further malign influence alleged is the lack of skill in our diplomatists.

These, then, deserve to be examined in more detail—the more so that at first sight they also seem unsatisfying as explanations. If the United

States resented our practice of impressing those whom we regarded as British seamen on American ships, that is doubtless a good *casus belli*—but it must have been as good near the beginning as in 1812. How came the States to endure the affront till 1812, and then, after a display of Job-like patience, fly into war at the eleventh hour? Again, the Continental System and the resulting Orders in Council were certainly vexatious to neutrals, but it was Napoleon's Continental System: he began the trouble, and we only retaliated. It seems hardly reasonable that the United States should go to war with us on account of a war-measure of our enemy's. And finally, as will appear, if it be true that our diplomacy was not all it might have been, it was straightforwardness itself when compared with Napoleon's over the same matter.

But, it might be urged, the United States went to war at the moment which suited them: they needed time to prepare themselves, they wished to intervene at a propitious moment: they availed themselves of a gross piece of provocation to declare war. Facts, however, do not square with these hypotheses any better than the preceding ones. The States did not prepare for war, and were quite unready for it when it came. The moment they chose was in no way propitious, for by 1812 the stress for England was over; from 1807 till 1811 she had had all Europe against

her except where her armies were keeping alive the struggle in Portugal and Spain; she had not enough ships to maintain the huge blockade set up by the Orders in Council, and an additional war with the United States would have been almost intolerable. But by 1812 much of the strain was over: Russia had left Napoleon's side and had joined us, thus opening both Russian and Swedish ports to our ships; Portugal was clear; affairs in Spain were going well; the Continental System was breaking down, and we had enough ships free to attend to a new war on the Atlantic. Nor was it any gross provocation which brought on the war: there was, as will be seen, such a piece of provocation, but it occurred in 1807; four years of wrangle over it had buried it beneath a vast barrow of diplomatic correspondence, and it was almost forgotten in 1812.

First, as to the impressment of seamen from American ships, it is important to recognise that the real point at issue was not the nationality of the seamen, because that was insoluble. We never, of course, claimed the right to press genuine American citizens—the only question was what was an American citizen? Our contention was that King George's subjects remained his subjects, and could not cast off their allegiance by naturalising themselves in the United States. The United States, on the other hand, claimed a natur-

alised citizen as a citizen of the Republic. And here was a flat contradiction in the law of the two nations which could not be settled on any moral grounds of abstract justice. Both sides had right. The real question was, *where* could each side exercise their right of *habeas corpus*? Clearly in America and in American waters the disputed *corpus* was American, and in Britain and British waters he was British. But what about that no-man's-land the high seas? Here the States maintained that when he was on an American merchant ship under the Stars and Stripes he was inviolable—whether he was naturalised or not—and on this we did not openly join issue. We did not claim the right to stop and visit the ship expressly to search for him, but we claimed that when—as was certainly legal—we visited and searched in order to see if the American ship was carrying contraband or breaking blockade, we had the right then to take any of King George's subjects whom we might incidentally discover in the act of evading allegiance. From this claim to enforce *British* law on an American ship on the high seas the States not unnaturally dissented.

The grounds of the American dissent are clear enough. Apart from the "insult to the flag," it is one thing to visit and search for contraband—under International Law—but another to remove a seaman—under British municipal law. The visiting belligerent does

not then and there remove or destroy the contraband (or did not in those days—submarines have altered things), but he sends the ship into port for an examination, which will be conducted by a court, coolly, in accordance with evidence and law. But the seaman had short shrift. If the visiting officers claimed him as British, he was carried off at once for the Navy—and once in, it was uncommonly difficult for him to escape, or to get his case heard. The opportunities for error in these hasty decisions are obvious. The *corpus* might be British, falsely claiming American nationality—or a Briton genuinely naturalised in the United States—or even American. We did not of course intend to seize this last kind, but mistakes of the sort were made, inevitably, when both parties spoke the same language and were of the same race.

Surprise may be felt that, whatever the rights of the case, England thought it worth while to provoke the States for the sake of a few seamen; but this is, again, to miss the point. It was not a special invasion of *American* rights; we claimed the same right of resuming fugitive seamen from the ships of any nation, though it is clear that the case will not be so common with others—or so difficult: British seamen will not be so much tempted to shelter under other European flags, nor will there be much hope of their being able to hide their real nationality if they do. Yet

though the principle was not new, it had hitherto been of little import in practice. It was the United States who made it important, and they had done so, willy-nilly, by the mere fact of coming into existence.

The whole affair was part of England's celebrated "Policy of Power," hinging, among other things, on the Navigation Acts. The policy is commonly held to begin with the Navigation Acts of Cromwell and Charles II.—though it is in reality far older, and dates back to Richard II., when that king, seemingly at the wish of the London companies, reversed the policy of his free-trading grandfather, Edward III. The gist of the policy, so far as it applied to the sea, was to keep up the supply of English ships as a reserve for the Navy, and of merchant seamen, who could be used in time of war to man them. The details do not concern us here, but of the essential wisdom of it there is no doubt. Our battlings with France proved it over and over again. France had only a small maritime population on which to draw: consequently, however well manned her ships at the beginning of a war, she could not replace losses,—we could. Therefore we wore her down. It was so in the war of American Independence: at first she matched us, Guichen foiled us in the West Indies, and de Grasse brought about the surrender at Yorktown; but when her ships began to be filled with *novices volontaires*—landlubbers recruited by boun-

ties—Rodney outmanœuvred and beat de Grasse. The badness of the Revolutionary fleets—manned by landmen, since the seafaring folk were mostly Royalist—made our task easy, even against larger numbers.

Thus England in a great war, where the fleet was the one weapon she could use against her enemy, was bound to uphold the policy of the Navigation Laws. Once let the supply of seamen dwindle, and she was ruined.

Here came in the United States. Until they won independence there was no leak through which our seamen could run away. But once another English-speaking maritime neutral nation came into being, not only was our carrying trade threatened—which would injure our shipping—but an asylum was opened to fugitive seamen. And they would naturally throng to it. Not only was the pay better—dollars for shillings—but it offered an escape from the press-gang, from all the long dull grinding service in the Navy in war-time, when life in the Navy was much harder than it is now.¹

This makes it plain not only that England would not yield the point, but in the stress of war could not. As it was she had a constant struggle to

keep her ships manned. If she gave way she would lose her seamen, and in losing them would lose everything: better to risk a war with the States than be forced to yield in Europe.

The risk, however, was not great. The States had often protested; the question had been discussed and left unsettled even before war began; there was no reason to apprehend that if the two nations had managed to keep peace from 1793 onwards for nine years, a renewal of war in Europe would lead to more than the usual friction—especially as there were a good many Americans (the Opposition) who, to embarrass their Government, asserted that our practice was reasonable, so long as we only took men to whose allegiance we had a right—and of course that was all we claimed to do.²

The question might become more serious if any flagrant provocation were given, or if it got mixed up with other causes of quarrel, or if it were mismanaged. All these things happened—and yet peace was still maintained for years.

In the month of June 1807 there were far up in Chesapeake Bay two French ships of war. A hundred miles lower down a small British squadron was lying in American waters watching for them. Between

¹ There are plenty of "British seamen" (naturalised Americans) in the U.S. Navy of to-day, a good many of them from our Navy. Before the war began our ships of war on the Halifax station had constant trouble with men anxious to slip off, the temptation being the old one—dollars for shillings.

² So Gouverneur Morris in 1808, and again even in 1813. Gaston of North Carolina and Strong of Massachusetts took the same view—after war had begun.

the two the U.S. frigate *Chesapeake* was fitting for sea in Hampton Roads. The relations between us and the States were thus (in spite of the seaman question) quite friendly. Our ships were enjoying American hospitality in order to watch their enemy, and our Government had just issued an instruction to the Navy to "observe the greatest caution in impressing British seamen." On June 22 the *Chesapeake* came down the bay. A British frigate, the *Leopard*, made sail and went out before her. When the two had got outside American territorial waters the *Leopard* hailed that she had a message for the *Chesapeake's* commander. This message proved to be a demand to be allowed to search his ship for British deserters. He, of course, refused, whereon the *Leopard* opened fire, killed or wounded twenty-one men, and compelled the *Chesapeake* to give in. Four of the crew held to be British deserters were taken off.

This astounding affair must, one assumes, be followed either by prompt apology and reparation, or by war. Yet, bewildering though it be, neither thing occurred. Monroe, United States Minister in England, made the mistake of writing to Canning about it before the official account had been issued, and—while admitting that it was "improper to mingle them with the present more serious causes of complaint"—of going on to couple this outrage with the old matters in dispute—namely, impress-

ment of seamen—with which it had clearly nothing to do. This was not a case of impressment, but a claim to arrest *deserters* from the Navy; moreover, the aggression was not upon an American merchant ship, but on a ship-of-war. This enabled Canning to evade the matter in a tone of lofty rebuke, on the ground that Monroe's statement only dealt with an "*alleged injury*," and that "*if the statement proved to be correct*," and it should be "*clearly shown* that injury had been sustained," reparation should be made; but meantime he quite agreed that it was lamentable that Monroe had not done what he thought proper, namely, abstain from mixing this affair with other things which had nothing to do with it. Meantime—all unknown of course in days before cables—President Jefferson had issued a proclamation which, after combining all the American grievances in one hash, ordered all British armed vessels to leave American waters, and refused entrance to any for the future. Secretary Madison also wrote to Monroe pressing a demand for disavowal and reparation, but also coupling with it the abolition of impressment as "an indispensable part of the satisfaction." This let Canning in to score again. Either, said he, the exclusion of British ships of war from American waters was an unfriendly act differentiating between England and her enemy France, or it was an attempt to obtain reparation before England had

dealt with the matter—while the matter was *sub judice*. And this dialectically was unanswerable.

So what was a plain issue, though it in no way bore on the question of impressment, was inextricably muddled with other things. Since Monroe could get no satisfaction, the States asked for a special envoy, and accordingly Rose was sent. But Rose's instructions bade him make no offer or disclosure of his terms until the President had withdrawn the exclusion order, and as the President refused to do that until Rose had disclosed what reparation England was prepared to make, nothing was done. Rose went home in April 1808, and three years more passed before redress was given. The correspondence was often acidulated, especially on our side, for Canning had a knack of writing despatches which only a stupid man would consider civil, because the insolence was so carefully veiled. In this art the Americans could not equal him, though at times they made clumsy attempts to compete. But the point to notice is that a grievous affront was given, no immediate apology was offered, the chief offender¹ was not punished, and yet war did not follow.

While this was going on other trouble was brewing, so complicated that it must be stated only in outline. In the autumn of 1806 Napoleon

issued his Berlin Decree, embodying the Continental System, and we countered by the Orders in Council of 1807. Napoleon declared us blockaded, and subjected to capture any neutrals trading to or from British ports, or carrying British goods. Our retort was to declare him blockaded, and to permit no trade with France or any country under French influence except through British ports. As to legality, it was a case of *Pot v. Kettle*. Both were blackish. Whichever had it, American neutral commerce would suffer grievously, and with both in the field it was hard for a neutral to do any trade at all that was innocent. But though Napoleon began it, the United States quickly diagnosed us as the chief offender, for two reasons. Napoleon's Continental System would have destroyed British trade, but this trade we carried on in the main ourselves. America did little of it, and so had little to lose. Our Orders in Council, however, bottled up the European trade, but as France and her allies had had few ships at sea, much of this had lain open to the neutral American, and now he would lose it. It was bound to go through British ports. But a more cogent reason still was that while Napoleon's threats were mostly those of Giant Pope—so far as they applied to Atlantic shipping—since he had no ships to enforce his decrees, England could make

¹ Admiral Berkely in command of the Chesapeake squadron.

her Orders in Council good—and did.

Here, then, was a new job for American negotiators—namely, to persuade or compel either or both of the belligerent parties to cancel or moderate their oppressive regulations. Clearly this would not be easy, for the States could put no pressure on Napoleon; and though they could threaten England with a war which would be embarrassing, we should regard even war with the United States as a lesser evil than submission to Napoleon's strangling Continental System. But the United States were not, as we have seen, thinking of war—yet awhile.

The first American measure was to pass an Embargo Act (Dec. 1807), which forbade American ships to clear for any foreign port. As the Non-Importation Act came into force at the same time, all trade between us and the States was suspended—and our Orders in Council prevented any coming to the States from French dominions. Jefferson placed "immense value on this experiment," as "the last card short of war." It did deprive us of cotton, American tobacco, and a good deal of wheat, but it hit its authors much harder. It killed American carrying trade at one blow. Boston harbour became a "huge forest of dry trees,"—ships laid up. In New York 380 ships lay idle. American seamen, thrown out of employment, took to embarking on British ships, much to our gain. A vast

smuggling trade to Nova Scotia and the West Indies sprang up. American ships either got out in ballast on fraudulent destinations, or refused to come home, and took part in our carrying trade (under licence) to help us to break Napoleon's Continental System. In fact, the Embargo Act was a total failure, save that it galled America into a feeling that even war would be less intolerable.

A year convinced even Jefferson that his policy of cutting off his own nose to spite our and Napoleon's faces was useless, and in 1809 a Non-Intercourse Act was substituted for the Embargo, which prohibited importations from the offenders, or direct trade with them, but otherwise let American vessels go where they would; to this was added a clause that if either France or Great Britain would cease its maltreatment of American commerce, intercourse with that country should be restored.

Here again the diplomatists grew busy. Canning unofficially "thought" some modification might be granted. Erskine, our Minister at Washington, went flatly in defiance of his instructions (which were explicit), and declared to the President that the Orders in Council "would be withdrawn" by June 10. The President, in return, suspended the Non-Intercourse Act as against us, and all was well till our Government, hearing what Erskine had done, disavowed him and recalled him. His successor,

Jackson, naturally had an ill reception, entangled himself in a correspondence which hurried from the Retort Courteous, through the Countercheck Quarrelsome, to the Lie Circumstantial (diplomats are too well-bred to go further), and Jackson was told that the United States Government would hold no further dealings with him. Whereon he withdrew. Canning had left the Foreign Office a little before, and Wellesley, his successor, fell back on a new policy—that of delay. No one was sent to fill Jackson's place for two years, and Wellesley commonly took three months to answer any communication from the American ambassador in London. This did not mend matters.

Meantime Napoleon was far more skilful; while, in fact, he was as great an offender as we were, having already confiscated a mass of American ships and goods under the plea that they had broken their own laws by coming to him,¹ he managed to convey to the States the idea that he was sympathetic and accommodating. Would he revoke his Decrees against America in consequence of the Non-Intercourse Act? Nothing would give him greater pleasure, and accordingly he caused his Minister, Champagny, to write a statement that the Decrees were withdrawn, accompanied by

certain conditions which, apparently clear, are in reality as ingeniously equivocal as anything the College of Jesuits ever produced.

Controversy now raged over what this meant. Napoleon said he had withdrawn the Decrees; we were sceptical. No public announcement had been made. Napoleon's mouth said one thing, his acts another; for French customs officers were still seizing American ships, ignorant—it would seem—that the Decrees had been revoked, and French courts instead of restoring vessels were to hold them "suspended." But the United States went by what Napoleon said, and assuming that he had done his part pressed us to revoke our Orders.² We refused till Napoleon had clearly shown that he was in earnest by formal revocation. A fresh diplomatic wrangle went on, complicated by Wellesley's delays and the confusion which came over our politics owing to the King's madness. In the end we declared (March 1812) that when the Berlin and Milan Decrees were publicly and authentically repealed, our Decrees would, without further order, be revoked. This put Napoleon in a difficulty: to revoke his Decrees now was to admit they had not been properly revoked hitherto, and thereby to put the United States in the

¹ March 23, 1810, under a decree published May 14, 1810: "Sentence first, verdict afterwards."

² Mainly that of 1809 which had superseded and narrowed those of 1807.

wrong. He slipped out by producing a Decree dated a year back (April 1811), stating that the Decrees "were definitely considered as not having existed in regard to American vessels" since November 1810. To make this more convincing, a statement was added that it had been sent to Russell, American *chargé* in London. But Russell denied this, and when the French Government was asked if it had been *published*, the answer was "No." Diplomatic evasion could hardly go further.

However, it was now too late. We revoked our Orders in Council so far as they concerned America on June 23, 1812, but on June 18 the United States Government had declared war on us.

These things emerge:—

(1) The original grounds of quarrel were all old, and by themselves did not lead rapidly or directly to war. The obnoxious Orders in Council had been modified (1809), and in June 1812 withdrawn; the question of impressment of seamen had not grown more acute; the affair of the *Chesapeake* had simmered down; even when, in the tension of 1811, an American warship, the *President*, had engaged and cut up our sloop, the *Little Belt*,¹ war did not break out. *There was no haste on either side.*

(2) The States as the aggrieved party showed a deal

of patience and long-suffering. Neither their diplomatists nor ours were always clever in the soft answer, but on the whole we were more unconciliatory than they. *Doubtless the fact that they were not ready for war made them hesitate, but they stomached more provocation than could have been expected.*

(3) We gave the offence *because we were the power supreme at sea.* What Napoleon threatened hurt America comparatively little: what we did in retaliation to him hurt much. Yet Napoleon began most of it. Till his Berlin and Milan Decrees America had no serious complaint against us; the impressment of seamen, by itself, would not have led to war.

(4) Yet Napoleon, though himself the chief offender, managed by his cleverness in diplomacy, and by deftly rubbing the sore places, to inflame the States against us and not against him. In the end he drew the States into being his ally, and *involved the two English-speaking races in a maritime war over neutral rights which he had been the first to violate.* He persuaded America to fight his quarrel.

Now bring these things up to date. Read Germany for Napoleon, the policy of frightfulness for the Continental System, questions of occasional contraband and continuous voyage for our blockade regu-

¹ The *President* chased the *Little Belt*; which fired first is not quite certain—probably our boat.

lations of 1807 and 1809, seizures of mail-packages for impressment of seamen, and so forth. We shall be at once grateful for two things: first, that our belligerent pressure on American neutral commerce, though doubtless serious, is not nearly so irritating as it was in Napoleon's time; and secondly, that Germany has not displayed Napoleon's adroitness. With her submarine policy she has begun a new infraction of neutral rights at least as serious as the Continental System, yet like the Continental System, mainly ineffective at sea, because the power to enforce it is lacking. But while Napoleon contrived to make us seem guilty of his illegalities, Germany has not contrived to shift her quarrel with the United States on to us—so far.

Not so far; but we are only in the second year of the war. And Napoleon did not embroil us with America till the war had gone on for nine years. The breach opened slowly, but it grew steadily wider till war came.

Are we to assume that there is a risk, a likelihood of this happening again? Putting it in the widest terms, does history offer any justification for some such formula as this: "In a *widespread* and prolonged *maritime* war there is a tendency *in the long-run* for the chief maritime neutral to be involved in war with the belligerent who is supreme at sea"? This will be a disquieting conclusion, particu-

larly if in place of the word "tendency" we have to put the stronger word "probability."

Let us put past wars in the witness-box. In the Seven Years' War (1756-1762) Spain and Holland were left as the chief maritime neutrals. We did not go to war with Holland: we did with Spain (1761). But then Spain was closely bound to our enemy France politically, and our quarrel with Spain was not over neutral rights. Case One not in point.

The War of American Independence (1775-1783) did not become maritime till France (1778) and Spain (1779) joined in it. That left Holland as the chief maritime neutral. In 1781 Holland did join against us *because we claimed to capture enemy goods on neutral ships*. What is more, we nearly went to war with the Northern Powers of the First Armed Neutrality—Sweden, Denmark, and Russia—over the same matter. Neither they nor Holland had any sympathy with the American colonists, or any quarrel with us save over neutral rights and wrongs. Case Two much in point.

In the Revolutionary War (1793-1802) the United States and Sweden, Denmark, and Russia were the chief neutrals. We did not go to war with the United States, but again we raised an Armed Neutrality against us, and we did go to war with Denmark over neutral rights (1801). We had no quarrel with Denmark save

over our policy of capture at sea and blockade. Case Three a good deal in point.

Case Four (1803-1815) we have already followed. We fought with the chief neutral, the United States, over neutral rights, in 1812. Case Four is again much in point.

In the American Civil War (1861-1865) Great Britain for once in a way was the chief neutral. We did not go to war with the belligerent supreme at sea, namely, the North. But at times we were dangerously near it. Case Five somewhat in point.

What Case Six holds in the future we do not know—but it has not yet gone on for long, as history reckons time.

There is, it would appear, enough in history to make the outlook somewhat disquieting. The formula is not invariably true: with the ghost of Austin before us (armed, of course, with a Sanction) we shall certainly not call it a Law. But clearly it is not safe to assume that if the United States eventually join in the war they will *inevitably* do so on our side. So far it seems likely that they will, somewhat in despite of the experience of the past. For this we may be grateful to America's sense of justice and honour, and to Germany's blunders; but Germany is persevering, and may find a way out of these.

GEORGE TOWNSEND WARNER.

HONEST MEN.

“When thieves fall out honest men come by their own.”

—*Proverb.*

I.

POETRY in one of her lighter and more spirited moments has acclaimed how glorious a thing it is to be a Pirate King: from a certain point of view it must be also in similar degree a glorious thing to be a German Emperor. When an august possessor of that fearsome title thought good to cast a continent into the unmitigated horrors of modern war, he could not upon paper write down his friends as very many, but as a matter of fact they were numerous indeed. In all parts of the world—in the Antipodes, in America, most of all perhaps in India—that great army that marches under the gaudy banner of crime realised with a beautiful and intelligent singleness of heart that here was their friend and protector, a name and a person wherewith instantly to identify themselves and all their nefarious works. I have said that this took place most of all in India, and this was almost naturally so, for in India, of all places of the world, men's minds are capable of the most curious warps and twists, and there of all places are they most inclined to idiotic action. The Kaiser had many friends in India; and if these friends were mostly to be found skulking by night in the back alleys

of bazaars, or hanging round lonely and ill-reputed stretches of road, or in the settlements of criminal tribes, or even in jail, well—one cannot have everything, and it is something to be loved even by such as these. I doubt if the German Emperor ever entered in the list of his allies the name of Potandhora Poturazu, but it was at one time apparent that Potandhora held himself to be a member, and by no means the least notable member, of that noble band.

To be introduced to Potandhora Poturazu you must leave behind you all the India that you ever knew or imagined, and adventure into a region where not only are there no rides and drives and bands and clubs, but where there are not even roads or carts or houses—in a word, the Matnameri Agency. Matnameri is a large district on the east coast of India, and about two-thirds of it consists of flattish arable land, with bare isolated knobby hills running in a strip up the coast. On the inside edge of this agreeable country you come to a flight of steps in the land, conceived on a generous scale: for the first of them is about five hundred feet, the second is just over a thousand, and the third and

last more nearly two. On the top of this lies the great triangular plateau of the Matnameri Agency, where even at this day you may shoot almost anything you wish, and where your chances of contracting the severest form of malarial fever are everywhere exceedingly high. Somewhere in the middle of this wilderness is a place called Hodul, where a civilian Assistant Agent and a Policeman and some native officials endeavour to exist. Hodul is just distinguishable from the jungle, the other "towns" of the place are not. Access to this paradise is obtained by three so-called ghats in the flight of steps above mentioned—not so much roads or even tracks as the beds of torrents temporarily and far from trustworthily dry,—these are passable to elephants, the inhabitants of the Matnameri Agency, and possibly goats; but your pack-bullock lies down and your horse falls seventy times to the mile. It is the most malarial, the most inaccessible, the most jungly, and the most animal-infested region in the south of India; and therefore, by the natural perversity of our race, is pre-eminently sought after by educated and cultured gentlemen of the I.C.S. and the Police.

Potandhora Poturazu began his life as the village carpenter of Happi, a village at the foot of the Kobram Ghat—in some respects the most awful ascent of the three. In those days his name was less impressive,

being simply Potanna; and even if you do not follow the great mysteries of Indian nomenclature your ear must tell you that Potanna is a decent sort of struggling artisan, whereas Potandhora Poturazu is a king and leader of men. As village carpenter he possessed rent-free a small plot of land, and this, in a moment of weakness and a hope of eluding detection, he mortgaged to a friend. But the black day came round when the mortgage fell due, and behold Potanna was unable to pay, whereupon a spiteful and domineering Government took the land from him and left him to work for his living as best he might. Shying from this distasteful prospect, he deserted his wife and family and took to the hills, where he joined as an insignificant member a very small and insignificant band of dacoits.

I do not suppose for an instant that the land of which he was deprived brought in the good Potanna more than a mere pittance—if indeed, in many years, it brought him in anything at all,—but there is no conceivable doubt that its removal from his possession aroused him to an almost incredible pitch of fury. As a carpenter, good authority has it that he was uncommonly lazy; as a dacoit he displayed from the outset the most amazing energy. Within a year—and that corresponded roughly to the first year of the European War—he had thoroughly recast the Kobram

gang of dacoits, had nearly trebled their number, and had committed eight separate dacoities. It is commonly believed at Kobram that he murdered the original leader of the band. You will easily understand from what I have said of the Matnameri Agency that it is not much of a country wherein to hunt dacoits, and the Matnameri Police thought twice before they attempted it; having thought twice, they thought yet a third time, and then apparently began it all over again. After all, Agency Tracts are Agency Tracts, and one must expect things of this sort to happen there,—though, to be sure, this fellow was going a bit beyond the score. Meanwhile Potanna becoming a person of very considerable importance, and not knowing whether to style himself a “Dhora” or a “Razu”—the two titles of the hillman—chose both, and became Potandhora Poturazu, leader of the Kobram gang, and potentially a very dangerous character.

About now enters the German Emperor. Quite suddenly the Kobram gang took to informing the simple people of the Agency that the British Raj was coming to an end, that a glorious and almost angelic race known as the Germans were about to cast the light of their faces on the sufferings of India, and that they, the Kobram gang, were the accredited agents, promoters, and friends of this benign people. “Just wait till the Germans come,”

said Potandhora to the vacillating. “You will see then that it was well to be on our side.” Now the simple people of the Matnameri Agency—as of other Agencies—preferred to cultivate their lands by burning down large portions of the forest and subsequently wandering away and leaving it to waste; and as this was very bad for the forest and many other things besides, the authorities were stepping in to prevent it. They had also of late been placing deplorable restrictions on the manufacture of mhowa-arrack and sago-toddy, drinks very dear indeed to the Matnameris. For these reasons they sat up and took notice when they heard about the Germans. Heaven knows who put these notions into Potanna’s head; some said German missionaries, some blamed a seditious paper of the plains, and others—probably most correctly—attributed it to the Devil. At all events, some officious person at Headquarters began to ask questions, and the Matnameri Police sat down to think it over yet again.

Possibly to encourage them in this laudable effort, possibly merely as a benefit or anniversary of some sort, the Kobram gang brought off the celebrated Hodul dacoity. Choosing an occasion when the Assistant Agent and the Assistant of Police were both remotely distant, they appeared in style about midnight outside the house of the Mokhasadar of Hodul, a gentleman of independent—and according to

rumour of enormous—means. The Mokhasadar's three younger sons, his brother-in-law, his uncle, and his two sons-in-law, with every male and female in his house, made one dash for the jungle at the first volley from the Kobram guns; the brother-in-law, however, remained long enough to urge the Mokhasadar to follow suit. "Not so," said he—he was a fat man of easy habits, and he had dealt with dacoits before—"I will give them a thousand rupees or so and they will go away." He reckoned, unhappy man, without Potandhora. The only witness of what transpired was the Mokhasadar's eldest son, who was an imbecile before the event and a gibbering lunatic ever afterwards—which is not surprising when one considers that Potandhora slung him by his feet from the verandah roof, and that he remained in that position from dusk till dawn. The final state to which the Mokhasadar was reduced is better left undescribed. The four family treasure-pits in the floor of the house were dug up and rifled, as well as two others which were not previously known by the relatives to exist. Having finished with the Mokhasadar, Potandhora set out to burn down the Assistant Agent's bungalow,—his failure to do so incensed that officer greatly, for it was indeed a detestable building,—and drew off triumphant towards dawn. The hour of his retiral coincided curiously enough with the arrival of the

Reserve Police from Malka, two miles off,—they had been removed there because of the unhealthiness of Hodul,—and opinion in Hodul to this day varies greatly as to whether the dacoits retired because the police arrived, or whether, as the ribald and irreverent state, the police watched from the hill outside the town till the dacoits had gone away. One constable did fire off his gun, but the cartridge missed fire, a fact which struck every one as perfectly natural.

The next morning about the hour of noon Potandhora entered the unhappy Hodul with a few choice associates, and polished off in broad daylight and the open street one Ulli Sanyasi, who was reported to have gone for the police the night before. Not a soul molested them, and Potandhora took the opportunity of throwing out a few delicate suggestions of what they might all expect when the Germans came. Cumming, the Assistant of Police, hurrying back to Hodul at the news, found himself deserted in mid-jungle by his terrified servants, and packing himself a wallet of biscuits and sodas, set out down the Kobram ghat. He arrived at Zandur, the Headquarters of the Matnameri District, after two days of this sort of travelling, and, presenting himself before the high powers of that select station, delivered himself fluently and at some length. . . .

At this point the story really begins.

II.

Now the District Superintendent of Police of Matnameri in these days was Peters, and the unfortunate thing about Peters was that he was not pleased with Matnameri. For this there was good reason. Peters had spent his service and won his laurels — which were far from inconsiderable — in the district of Kattim, far away to the south — that hot, flat, and teeming place whose criminal statistics easily top the list for South India. Previous to that he had held one of the subdivisions out in the direction of Arcot — only a rupee fare from Madras, and all the crack undesirables of that benighted city coming down for flying visits in consequence. Of fabricating and delivering false evidence, of cooking an account and concocting a case of the refinements and finesses of villainy, the people of Kattim had nothing whatever to learn; and to go out against them with plain and straightforward methods of procedure was simply to invite defeat. For seven years, therefore, Peters had been dealing — and incidentally dealing brilliantly — in a huge business on the disguise-and-spy-informer, trap-letter, and fake-advertisement line; and, presumably because he loved this work and did it exceedingly well, he was transferred to Matnameri. Now, except for a few strongholds of pleaders, the Matnameris, even in the plains part of the

District, are to this day an unsophisticated lot; in the Agency, the domain of Potandhora and Cumming, they were as little children. In the Agency, if a man offended you you killed him; and if subsequently the police, for reasons best known to God and to themselves, came round with questions, you did not deny that you had done it, but only tried to show them what a pig the deceased had been. If an enterprising officer went among them disguised as a Biluchi or a Turk, they would not have had the slightest idea what he was intended to represent — nor would they greatly have cared. But this was repugnant to Peters, who clung to the methods of Kattim, and hated Matnameri accordingly.

Cumming, on the other hand, had been five and a half years at Hodul, and except for moments of black depression about the beginnings and endings of the rains, he was happy there, and liked it. He knew every one had forgotten all about him personally, but he was only vexed when they also forgot him too obviously officially. Nobody bothered much about the Agency: Peters had never seen it, and Kirk the Deputy Inspector-General had never seen it for twenty years. It was this attitude that Cumming criticised before Peters on his arrival one day at Zandur, some three months after the Hodul dacoity. He had been after the Kobram gang ever

since that memorable night, and in credit to Potandhora, it must be allowed that his successes had been nil. Kirk, by some chance, was present, and listened beaming to Cumming's orations.

"It's a topping country and all that," said Cumming, winding up, "the only thing is——"

"The paucity of help accorded me in my operations'—eh?" said the D.I.G. He was a fat man, with an eyeglass; he was very fond of gin and ginger, and at intervals he smote his hands softly together, and said "What?"

"Well—er, yes, sir," said Cumming. "That's a bit like it."

"I don't see your difficulty," said Peters, fuming. "I don't see your difficulty. You have a reserve of twenty-five men at Malka."

"I don't think you quite realise the nature of the country, sir," said the patient Cumming. "What are marked on the map as villages are only four houses, or two houses, or sometimes only the place where a house was once."

The D.I.G. chuckled.

"Grand country," said he, "grand country. Takes me back twenty years." And he fell into a trance.

"And then the roads aren't roads," went on Cumming, "only paths through thick jungle on both sides. Even if I had two hundred and fifty men I couldn't catch 'em without a lot of organisation. I should want at least a hundred."

"Nonsense," said Peters.

"What's the strength of the gang?"

"Twenty-five, perhaps thirty, perhaps thirty-five. Not more."

"Armed?"

"They had about ten guns of a sort, and they've taken four more—rather better ones—from Hodul."

"And you want a hundred men for a crew like that? Ab-surd. Apart from the undesirability of huge armies of armed police going about, it seems perfectly clear to me that if you can't catch them with thirty men, you won't catch them with five hundred. It's a clear case for strategy."

"Well, sir," said Cumming wearily, "what would you suggest?"

"To be frank with you," said Peters, "it's been in my mind for some time. I've said nothing, because I thought it must soon occur to yourself. You say this Potandhora believes himself in league with the Germans."

"So he says."

"And expects them to arrive here shortly?"

"M—m."

"But he has no information—no genuine information about them, I mean."

"No."

"Then doesn't it strike you that the obvious thing is to make up a party of supposed Germans, decoy the gang to meet you, and simply arrest them."

"But," said Cumming, staggered for the moment, "Germans aren't black."

"Neither am I," said Peters. "Neither are you. Neither is

Kirk. Neither is Bellew. Neither are the reserve sergeants. It strikes me as elementary."

"Good God!" said Cumming.

"Eh? Germans?" Kirk had wakened up at the sound of his name. "Gad! that's an idea. Something in that, you know. What?"

"Then you would approve of the idea, sir?" Thus the eager Peters.

"Oh Lord, yes. Oh Lord, yes. Your show, old boy; manage it your own way. Don't believe in too much interference. Always got too much advice myself. Well, what about tiffin, eh? Worst of you Agency-wallahs"—the eyeglass turned upon Cumming—"you're always so full up with

schemes an' things. What?" He beamed lavishly.

It was only by an extreme effort that Cumming refrained from gnashing his teeth in his face.

In the Zandur Club that evening, said Hitchens, Collector, a robust and jovial man, to Wytych, the Judge—

"Heard the Petrel's latest? Wants us to fake up as decoy Germans, to nobble the Kobram gang. Good?"

"Good God!" said Wytych, in unconscious echo of Cumming, "and do you propose to go?"

"Can't," said Hitchens; "but oh, my Witching One, I'd give my soul and honour to be there."

III.

"As for old Petrel's German idea——" said Cumming.

"Putrid," said Bellew, anticipating; "sheer bilge." Bellew was an Assistant Superintendent, fresh from the Probationer's School at Vellore, and his reverence for his superiors was not what it might have been.

"It's too much Kattim," said Cumming. "How are these devils going to know we're meant to be Germans? They never saw a German. They probably think Germans are blue or striped or something. But the Petrel's got to copying the German topi now. He *can't* see it."

"Good egg!" said Bellew. "Fancy the old Petrel jump-

ing up on a rock and shouting out, "Hi! Sprechlich Verboten!" or something, and all these chaps instantly tumbling to its being pukka German. Great! We *shall* have a time."

Cumming cast him a sour look. It was not seemly that he should open his soul to a junior such as this; but he must needs deliver himself to somebody, and Peters was out of the question. Kirk—thank Heaven—had departed to Gauthara.

"It's like this," said he: "I haven't had a chance. There's something going on I don't know about. I'd have had the brutes three or four times but for that."

Bellew made appropriate sounds.

"Some one keeps giving the game away," pursued Cumming—"some one who always knows the game jolly well. It can't be any of the men: they all know they're in for a good thing when this gang is hooked, and I must say that when I'm there they're keen too. It isn't villagers: they're in a hopeless funk, and all they want is to keep jolly well clear of both sides and lie low. It's some one who's about equal pals with the police and the dacoits. I've been more than five years in Hodul now, and I've yet to meet any fellow answering to that."

"Must be an unusual sort of bird," said Bellew. "Rough on you anyway,"—both of which remarks were eminently true.

Long, long ago, almost as remote in time as the days when Kirk, as a newly joined Assistant, tramped the jungles of Hodul, there was stationed in that sweet spot one Gurumurti, Head Constable No. 990. Those were the great days of Head Constables, and great indeed was Gurumurti. Now it is possible to place a man between two stout bamboos and roll him there till every muscle of his body is battered and ground to jelly and pulp, and yet to leave no outward sign of injury; and this, as will be readily seen, is a useful thing to know. But either No. 990 grew careless or some officious person instituted an inquiry; at all events something very decidedly came

out, and, one thing leading to another, the Force found itself able to dispense with Mr Gurumurti's services. He disappeared for a matter of five years or so, though those who profess to know about such matters state that some one very like him was acting as butler in a European household at Rangoon about this period. Rangoon is a useful place to go to, nor is the office of butler in a suitable household—bachelor for choice—by any means to be despised. It is at least certain that the date of the disappearance of that faithful retainer from Rangoon coincides almost exactly with the appearance in the plains of Matnameri of one Bhaskaraswami, a very holy man, in a salmon-coloured cloth, bearing with him printed pamphlets of many startling colours dealing with religious topics. He was very hairy, and wore a large beard, and was not *very* like Gurumurti. With the amazing credulity of one Indian towards another, the plains villages took him to their hearts; presently, it appeared, he was about to found a *mattam*, a religious society; next, he was collecting moneys for the same, and distributing further coloured pamphlets; next, the leading Brahmin ryots of Andurapalle were bringing against him a case of embezzlement and fraud; next, the good Bhaskaraswami had absconded, and was gone. There is an interval of two years here which no one has ever filled, but probabilities point to Haiderabad. At all

events, it was from the Haiderabad side that there came to Hodul a wandering saint, dwelling in the jungles, and living on herbs and water, an elderly man, very dirty, but palpably holy, and a man who had seen life. He ranged the jungles all over the Agency plateau, declaring, and proving, himself free from malaria, though Heaven knows he had many other afflictions. And then one evening early in the year he appeared among the police lines at Malka, and displayed at once a remarkable familiarity with these buildings. "Here it was," said he musingly, "that the Assistant Dora beat Munisawmi the Jemadar after he had let a prisoner escape. And here Sheik Sattar was bitten by a mad dog. 342 was his number, as I know." It was left to the Head Constable, No. 76, to complete the tableau. "A black day is this," said he, emerging from his hut. "Your name is Gurumurti, and you are my father's brother." "True," said the saint; "now give me some food."

Now there are many things you may expect a native to do, but to give away or turn away a relative is not among them; and by a relative he understands every human being with whom a tie can possibly be traced. An uncle is a near relative, and Number 76 was human. Thus it was that this wandering and saintly man, who knew the jungles like a book and the inhabitants thereof, this most abominable

old scoundrel—to drop all pretences—who levied a toll of some sort on every village in the hills, and let not a single pie, or the chance thereof, slip past him, came very regularly to the Lines of Police at Malka, and hung about the Station House at Hodul, and heard and saw and took his way to profit as best he might: and thus it was that the one man in all that area of land who knew nothing of the saint or his devices was Cumming. I think it will be obvious to those who have dealt with the native to any extent that these things would be necessarily so.

At the risk of tedium we must consider for a moment one more great and dominating figure—Samuel the butler of the D.S.P.'s of Matnameri. Samuel had held this office for a quarter of a century: officers might bring old and favoured servants with them to Zandur, but Samuel saw to it that they never stayed. No man with work to do can carry on a war of this sort as well, and as the D.S.P.'s of Matnameri were mostly bachelors, Samuel almost always won. Mrs Shipman fought him for a year by dint of spending huge sums on importing servants from Madras, and at the end of that time she left victorious, but Shipman's successor was a bachelor, and Samuel was in again in a month. He was a large and stoutish man, a Mission Christian, and a man of fair and persuasive speech; but there was no one more skilled to penetrate and utilise

the hideous sinks and byways of an Indian compound than he. He had bought a little land outside Zandur, and he carried immense weight for miles around. When a man has a household of twenty servants besides outsiders, the entire peons of a fair-sized station, half a score of clerks and petty officials, and God knows how many constables absolutely and completely under his thumb, the things which he desires tend to get themselves carried into effect. In India, unless you can get hold of the very biggest, the smallest are always the most useful.

"He says now," said Samuel to an audience in the back verandah, "that we must go upon an Agency camp. This is bad."

"How?" said the camp boy quickly; "you will not go?" He was totalling up in his mind the makings of that camp in empty bottles and tins, and in pickings here and

there among the stupid villagers.

"Go." Samuel smothered him with a look, but added graciously, as among equals, "It may be worth while."

"There will be fever," said the chokra dismally.

"They say," said the syce, "that by drinking toddy fever is avoided."

"That is a lie," said Samuel. "Toddy is bad and so is fever. There will be a little fever, no doubt. But it will not be for long."

The oracle had spoken and the audience sighed with relief. It was left to the matey, an upstart youth in a pork-pie cap, to ask the needless question.

"How will you manage it?" said he.

The outraged Samuel blew himself out like a pigeon.

"I am butler of this house," said he; "I will arrange all. The orders will be mine. Go, Unmentionable Thing, and clean the lamps."

IV.

Begins now the soul-stirring Odyssey of the Matnameri expedition. It numbered eight, not counting Samuel and a few other chosen slaves, about twelve souls — Peters, the irreverent Bellew, Caton, the Assistant Collector ("It's the chance of your life" — thus Hitchens — "don't miss it"), an Inspector and three Sergeants of the Reserve Police — all ex-Tommies these, — two youths from the Salt Department, and

the most presentable members of the local company of the Gauthara and Matnameri Volunteer Rifles. That Katimitis (Bellew's word, this) which beset Peters had caused him to rig them out in a series of remarkable garments which he supposed to resemble one or other of the German uniforms, — though after the Volunteer tailor had done his worst they resembled nothing on earth. The German-style topi was

carried out more faithfully and elicited various comments. "As if these blights could tell the difference" (Bellew); "This is Tipperary all right, eh, sir?" (Inspector Reads); "Wot the 'ell's this?" (Sergeant Pink); and "Man, Pink, ye're a humblin' sight the day" (Sergeant Ross). The embittered Cumming, who was returning to his own operations, watched them depart in silence. "God help the Agency," said he; "this lot 'll be worse than a dozen cyclones." "An interesting experiment," said Peters, and rubbed his hands.

As in great orchestras the conductor frequently does not take his seat till the second or third item on the programme, so it was with the Matnameri expedition. The rival commanders, you will please observe, were Peters in the cause of law, order, and justice, and Potandhora Poturazu in the cause of everything else. On paper at least this was so. It held good in actual fact for about forty-eight hours, in which time the expedition had advanced as far as the foot of the Karriki Ghat. A dozen or so of disguised sub-inspectors were on in front to spread the news of a German landing and the coming advance of a small party of Germans into the hills. Cumming meanwhile was almost back at Hodul. And at the foot of the Karriki Ghat the rival conductors made their real appearance, creeping in as is the wont of conductors by nether and mysterious ways.

The rebel general appeared

in the form of an elderly man, clad in a cloth of much service which might at one time have been the sacred salmon-colour, but which now displayed every shade from grey to sepia. He was discovered seated on a rock by the side of a little stream deep in meditation, and he took no more notice of the expedition than if it had never existed. Now Peters was versed in the beggar-talk of almost every Indian tongue, and with appropriate words and gestures he essayed to draw the holy man into speech and to inquire of him the whereabouts of the Kobram gang. The saint smiled an unprepossessing smile, and answered sweetly that he was a poor wanderer of no means whatever and was but that day come from the north, that his footsteps were guided by the will of God, and that he had no fear of dacoits, having nothing at all to lose. It is notable that Samuel was hovering near during the whole of this interview, and it has been reported that there lurked in his placid eye a curious light of admiration. It is said to be a gift of the greatest generals to recognise at once the real genius among their opponents: Samuel had this gift, and by virtue thereof he thenceforward took supreme command of the Matnameri expedition.

Entirely without a word said or any preconceived arrangement, he contrived to have a long interview with the saint outside the camp that night. He returned therefrom full of cheering words.

"It will take time," he said to the chokra, who sat staring at the great dark thickets of bamboo in a minor paralysis of fear; "but it can be done. It is not at all seemly that our master should be going about the country dressed up like this. Nor is it good for men of my age to come to places where there are no go-downs and no bazaar. All this must come to an end, and very soon too."

"God grant it may be so," said the chokra piously.

The Karriki Ghat is the most dismal of the three, and the hardest, inasmuch as it goes up the two last steps of the hills in one movement. There are about twelve miles of it, all execrable going, over boulders and stones, and an irritating knee-deep stream that crosses the track time after time. Here and there one comes out upon open stretches of hillside—the black, formidable hills of India—and sees around one immense and terrifying peaks, but the most of the way is done through dense bamboo thickets shutting out the sun. The expedition took a day to it, and a killing, hard day it was; round them, as they stumbled and slipped, they heard the sambhur-bell and all the voices of the jungle, and once towards evening there came a sound that sent all the servants into a twitter of fear—the deep hough-hough of a panther, like some one earnestly sawing wood. It was a comfort to reach the top and to see the tents pitched and the fires glowing out pleasantly. Dinner,

however, was marred by two unfortunate incidents: about the second course a raw-edged sphere of lead ripped through Bellew's tent from side to side; and later, at the pudding, a second shot sprayed the camp with a deluge of nails and small iron. "Merely a demonstration," said Peters; "perhaps to test our good faith." "Seems to be testing our tempers all right," said the irreverent Bellew; "listen to Ross." Ross had been hit in the shoulder by a nail, and was justifiably annoyed.

"Some one is playing the fool," said Samuel to the chokra. "This will stop," and stop it did after one more shot—a lump of pig-iron this time apparently, which landed in the tinned stores with an edifying crash. It is notable in this connection that after dinner Samuel had another long interview with the saint outside the camp. It was apparently more satisfactory than the last.

"The thing is quite easy," he said, "but he demands very much money. Somehow he has been making much money out of these people here, and if he is to give them up he asks a great deal. What is to be done? It is his gain to save these budmashes and so to keep us wandering about this cursed country. Now it is by all means desirable that we get out of it as soon as possible. I have said before that it is unseemly. We must find a way."

The chokra replied merely that he was "seeck," whereat

Samuel permitted himself to snort contemptuously, and wrapping himself in some warm garments left the camp.

I think it must by now be clear that the contest, Peters v. Potandhora, for law, order, and justice had somewhat vanished and had thinned itself down to the more concrete form, Samuel v. Gurumurti on the issue—how soon and how profitably can this come to an end.

Camp, about to strike the next morning, was horrified to find no Samuel; no one had seen him since dinner-time, and the chokra lay helplessly "seeck," a prey to all the devils of the Agency. After a couple of anxious hours, however, Samuel made his appearance and, staving off rebuke, presented himself very solemnly before Peters. To that interested officer he related how he had gone out in the morning to survey the country, had lost himself most unfortunately in the jungle, but had there met a hillman professing to be in very truth a member of the gang. "Last night shooting, sir," said Samuel, adding the artistic verisimilitude. "The devil he was," said Peters. The marksman, it appeared, had heard that they were Germans and was very pleased about it, but Potandhora had insisted on his shooting at the camp to prove their good faith. (Oh, cunning Samuel, you read your master's mind. "I thought that was it," said Peters.) All were very pleased that their fire had not been returned, and

to-morrow, just at dawn, as a token of friendliness, Potandhora and the chief of his band would present themselves before his Honour and discuss the situation. It was therefore unnecessary to go any further, which, with that fool of a chokra so "seeck," was just as well.

"Well done, Samuel," said the delighted Peters. "This is splendid. You'll get the reward for this. By Jove, you deserve it."

The placid Samuel thought modestly that he did.

For indeed the night had not been without its difficulties, its moments of terror. Outside the camp he had met the saintly Gurumurti, and together, wrangling all the way on matter of annas and rupees, they had gone many weary miles into the hills, until finally they had come upon a clearing in the jungle and a gang of horrifying beings. They were wild-eyed and scantily clad, and they carried most murderous cross-hilted knives, the broad blades of which writhed like serpents, and they looked upon the fatness of Samuel as though they would fain have probed its depth. "Few butlers," thought Samuel with pardonable pride, "would go through this." Confronting him he found a lean and smallish man, with crisp, curling hair and a cat-like grace of movement; and this, he knew very well, was the black Potandhora himself.

The Saint made an elaborate salaam, casting his right hand

above his head, after the fashion of the hills.

"This is the man," said he.

"Is it true, then," said Potandhora, "that your master beats you?"

"True, indeed," said Samuel.

"And gladly would I kill him; but I am only a servant, and I am afraid."

"You hate him?" said Potandhora admiringly: he understood that feeling very well. Samuel's answer would have caused the unconscious Peters to tremble in his shoes.

"Good." Potandhora stretched himself, displaying the armoury of knives at his waist. "Then is it true, as this man says,"—he waved a hand toward the benign Gurumurti—"that if he leads us to your camp to-morrow night you will be able to hand us all their rifles and all their powder and bullets?"

"Assuredly," said Samuel. "You are to come just before dawn. He is to bring for me so many rupees. When he gives me the rupees, I will hand you out the rifles. There is nothing really to fear. They think you take them for Germans."

"Germans!" A wave of unpleasant laughter ran round the fire. "Everybody knows there are no such people as Germans. There is no war. The British Raj invented the lie so that they could screw more money out of the Indian people. I was clever, and I made capital out of it. Others were fools, and paid money. As for these—they are not Indians, so they must be Eng-

lish. Who ever heard of any other people?"

"What a thing it is to have a mind!" Samuel had said.

All that had been easy and pleasant. Not so easy had it been when, only a hundred yards away from the dacoits' camp, the Saint had come stealing upon him like a shadow again, and hissed in his ear—

"You pay me half the reward you get from the sahibs for this."

"A third," said Samuel stoutly,—*"so it was arranged."*

"A half," said the holy Gurumurti, "or I give you away here and now, and Potandhora will rip you up like a sheep."

Yes, that had been a nasty moment, and it was then that the little revolver Samuel had stolen from a D.S.P. in the long ago had come in uncommonly useful. There were no cartridges, and Samuel was not quite sure how to use it even if there had been, but Gurumurti had not known that. He had climbed down with remarkable speed.

"There is no sense in trying to make too much," Samuel had told him. "You are to bring these people to our camp. They are to pay you very well for that, and it is your look-out to see that they pay you in advance. You are also to carry my present for handing out the rifles. Half of that you are to get for yourself, as I have said, and besides that the third part of whatever I get from the sahibs. That is fair, and you will do very well out of it. The

sahibs will certainly catch your dacoits, and you will make no more out of them. It is really only through my kindness that you will get so much. It is fair. So much milk you can get from a cow, but there is no sense in squeezing it dry. It simply spoils the cow for everybody. Let it be as it is."

And meanwhile—and herein, I venture to suggest, lies any point and value this history may possess—meanwhile the good Peters, tossing on his camp-cot at the head of the

Karriki Ghat, believed that he and no other was leading an expedition of cunning structure and design against the Kobram gang. He fancied that Samuel's time was fully occupied with the purveyal to that expedition of three meals a day and the movement of its belongings from point to point. The saintly man Gurumurti, late Head Constable 990, late Bhaskaraswami, Commander-in-Chief of a Brahminical society, late saint of Haiderabad,—of him he had forgotten altogether even the little that he knew.

V.

History and fable alike abound in examples of the utter disaster that falls upon those who aspire after the one thing too many. There was the sad case of Fatima, the wife of Bluebeard; there was that unfortunate young man, the Third Calendar; there was Œdipous Turannos,—to these and their many fellows this narrative has the privilege of adding the case of Gurumurti.

Presumably when one has spent the first flush of one's manhood among the petty extortions and bribery of a series of police stations—one's father being, to begin with, a dismissed Revenue Inspector—and has thereafter exerted all one's ingenuity in the fleecing of ignorant and credulous villagers; and when, finally, one has lived very comfortably for some months by peddling exclusive police information to a wealthy gang of dacoits;—pre-

sumably then it may be difficult to realise that there comes a time when the wise man asks no further. To the saintly Gurumurti money-grubbing had become more than a second nature, it was a mania, an obsession: the thought that an anna, or the quarter of an anna, was going past him caused him to writhe in anguish; the mere suggestion that he was not making all that could be made out of any given business cast him into the horrors of the pit. There is absolutely no doubt that after Samuel and his unpleasant revolver took their way, he set out to make the lives of Potandhora and his friends a burden to them. Now, your true dacoit makes his money easily, and having done so does not care to haggle over fractions of a rupee; and one can readily imagine that this oily saint, alternately oringring and

bullying for an extra anna on his terms, struck the gentlemen of Kobram as an irritating figure. That they started on their journey to the Karriki camp is manifest, but it was a journey of which Gurumurti never saw the end. Opinions vary as to the fatal demand: some say he wished for the secret burying-place of the huge treasure reft from the unhappy Mokhasadar of Hodul, some say it was a lady popularly regarded as the exclusive property of Potandhora—at all events somewhere near Bhasku, a village some four miles above Karriki, he provoked that harassed leader too far. His reward was a full and magnificent stroke just under the chin from Potandhora's cross-hilted, serpent-bladed knife. There was a tiny hole under his left ear where the tip of that stout blade came through. Save as an object to be removed from the pathway, Gurumurti gave no further trouble whatever.

The deed being done, and every one immensely relieved in consequence, it doubtless struck Potandhora with wonder that he had not achieved it long ago. They were now only four miles from Karriki, the way was familiar, there was no further need of Gurumurti at all. After what can only have been a brief hesitation, Potandhora cached his band in the old traveller's bungalow at Bhasku—a most depressing structure of mud, with a mass of dejected thatch weeping over the eaves—and taking only a single lieutenant struck

down for Karriki and Samuel. The great man had his own reasons for sleeping lightly that night, and about half-past two or three in the morning Potandhora got him out into the bamboo thicket at the back of the camp. But Potandhora had brought no money, and Samuel had the true servant's mania for an advance, with the result that they argued long and bitterly.

The Thieves having already fallen out, now enter the *Honest Men*. In his old days in the Shropshires, Inspector Reads had developed a mania for shikar. His shikar was strictly of that order known to and delighted in by the British Tommy in India: that is to say, he knew nothing of heads or measurements or horns in velvet; nor paid he any heed to the Scriptural distinction, "male and female created He them." His method was to get up very early in the morning, and crawl about at random on his stomach until something—a peahen maybe or a sambur doe—hove in sight; he then opened fire with his service rifle, and gathered up the fragments that remained. It is a crime to use a service rifle anywhere else than on a range, and it is a crime also to shoot female deer; nathelless both these things are done. Thus it was that at the first flicker of dawn Inspector Reads, having seen nothing and shot at nothing, and being consequently in the poorest of tempers, crawled almost on to the top of Messrs Samuel and Potandhora in the

middle of their heated argument.

Inspector Reads knew nothing of diplomacy, held no views on strategic tactics, suffered from Kattimitis not at all. He only knew—and the knowledge had been tested in four campaigns—that he saw in front of him a particularly villainous-looking character whose face aroused all his worst apprehensions.

"That's a dacoit," said he, "or my name ain't Reads," and so saying he sprang upon Potandhora from behind and bore him to earth. The other dacoit fled like an antelope, and was never seen or heard of again. Samuel, snatching the situation with the promptness of the truly great, threw himself upon the combatants with a force that ground the wretched Potandhora's face deep among the bamboo roots. It was all over bar shouting.

"A spy again, I suppose," said Peters, rubbing his hands, and facing with his pleasant smile the baleful glare of Potandhora. "What a suspicious lot they are. Well, I suppose the others will come in presently."

They did.

For elsewhere also had Thieves been falling out. The nephew of Gurumurti, Head Constable No. 76 of Malka, for some time had been viewing his saintly uncle with a growing dislike. For one thing he was a hideous drain on the family purse; he never paid a pie for his meals—which were frequent,—and if the curry displeased him his abuse—the

startling polyglot eye-opening abuse of the Hindu beggar—was awful to hear. Moreover, the old devil had been unpleasantly constant in his attentions towards Gangamma, the wife of No. 76,—an attractive lady, and to all appearance strictly virtuous—though the Hindu mythology is rather depressing on this aspect of the female character. The climax, however, came when an anonymous petition against No. 76 was presented to Cumming; it was full of moral and physical accusations of the most lurid character, and No. 76 when confronted with the document was pleased to observe that, whoever had inspired the sentiments, the handwriting was undoubtedly that of his respected uncle. He did not say so at the time, but the next day Cumming, still wondering drearily how it was that the dacoits obtained their infallible information, received a hint. No one openly gave it, it fell as it were from heaven: but No. 76 was summoned.

"Tell me the whole truth," said Cumming, "and you shall go unpunished."

Head Constable No. 76, standing stiffly to attention, told.

"And very nice, too," said Cumming. "The sooner poor old Peters hears of this the better. He stands a rather smaller chance than ever. Moreover, it is just conceivable that a smart lad, acting with promptitude somewhere on the Karriki side, might nobble the good Gurumurti. This, I think, is where we tell off ten men for

duty, and steam under forced draught for Karriki."

To those who cannot yet see what is coming it is only necessary to add that the direct road from Hodul to Karriki runs through Bhasku. Further, the humorous deity who presides over the neat coincidence of times was on his best form. The inhabitants of Bhasku, shivering with cold and full of amazing rumours, met Cumming a furlong or so from the depressing bungalow of that place.

The members of the Kobram gang came into Karriki as Peters had anticipated. With a difference, however, for they marched in neat order two and two, and they were led, not by Potandhora, but by Cumming.

"Well, I'm hanged," said Peters. "Caught twice over. If you hadn't got 'em when you did, we should have had 'em here in another hour or so.

I don't think you can laugh at my German business now."

Cumming stared at him fixedly for a full half minute and then burst into a hideous guffaw. He roared and rocked himself about for a space of time, at the close of which he was understood to say he would be getting back to Hodul.

"You see," he said to Bellew in farewell, "it's the Gospel truth. Look at the thing from the point of view of an outsider any blessed way you like, and it looks as if it just was his beastly German dodge that got them. I'm just a fortuitous and superfluous incident. If I say a word it's my filthy jealousy. See?"

Said the irreverent Bellew, adhering religiously to the German illusion—

"Well, I geblowöd am. Ach zo-o-o."

HILTON BROWN.

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

OF MENDING A WIRE.

"Mrs Harris,—which I don't believe there's no sich person."

THE reference is to immortal Sairey Gamp's friend. A malarial memory and the fact that I haven't the book by me are jointly and severally responsible for inaccuracy in the quoting. Even as it stands it serves to start us off, because this tale is very much about *Mr Harris*. Augustus Vavasour Harris lived in Nigeria. He was rather energetic, and he had the conversation habit. His name appeared in an official list, towards the bottom of the section headed "Political Officers." His wage was small, he lacked greatly in discipline, and he had a knack of getting into positions which involved him in a telling-off from this or that or the other authority. To tell truth, Augustus dearly loved a good hearty hard-hitting difference, always provided that the other differer was a more important man than himself. He said there was no fun fighting a man who got less wages than one did oneself.

In the summer of 1914 Mr Harris was administering with more or less success an area that we will call Gembo. It extended over some thousands of square miles and presented much physical variety. There were very rocky mountains,

and there were some very extensive tracts of swamp. Politically also Gembo was interesting,—in that the rocky mountains were covered as to their tops by villages of pepper-pot-like huts, full of naked and very active savages, whilst the flat parts of the Division supported a population of slender, much-clothed Muslim farmers and cattle-owners. The hill-toppers would listen to no orders, and they flicked arrows at Augustus and his Police escort when he went to see them: the dressy people down below listened to everything—and then went away and busied themselves devising means to defeat the purpose of the Political Officer. And the people on the hills were said to be "Tawai," which means, in Hausa, outlaws, whereas the men of the plain were called "Masumunafunchi," which means schemers of ill. Harris saw not much good in the country, and less in the people.

Now in that land the rains start in June, and by August have properly got going. At the beginning of the latter month Augustus Vavasour was sitting in his headquarters, a truly delightful spot called Danafa. There were a company of Native

infantry, with a couple of white officers, and a doctor, and all these lived on a mud flat near the river. The quarters were of mud and thatch, and the local mud makes walls which melt very quickly and quietly before rain. Danafa breeds a very potent sort of white ant, a beast that diets himself exclusively on the thatch of a white man's house: so that all unexpectedly the roof falls on you, falls wholly or in part at that precise moment when doing this causes you most inconvenience. Thus the Doctor's roof descended when he was in the act of pulling out the O.C. Troops' aching eye-tooth—with all his tools and antiseptics and towels and bottles and things neatly furnished forth atop of a saddle chest alongside him. Harris's roof fell in when he was half-way through typing a very unconvincing set of reasons why he had, or had not, done something or other. The reasons didn't suffer, but the machine was ruined.

Every European's house—in the rains—was truly his castle, in Danafa. And it had a moat to it. The quarters were scattered about over a square mile; wherever there was a small knob of ground rising a few feet or inches from its surroundings, there, bang on top of same, had been dumped a dwelling. To get from one of these palaces to the next, say a quarter of a mile, you mounted a horse and plunged into six inches or more of water. You

ploughed your way through mixed mud and grass and water and holes, and presently got to the next knob, with a house atop. Ponies didn't much care about the going after dark, and the dining-out habit never really became a curse in Danafa. It never took hold of the European community there.

Close to the Station was a brand-new native town. The Emir and all his court lived there, moved up a few months before. The Native Palace of Justice, and Jail, and Treasury, and so forth—all brand-new—started to fall down when the rains began; and the Emir and everybody else endured whatever discomfort may arise from getting wet every time it rains. The only people who forebore complaint were the prisoners in the Jail; and as several of them got away, chains and all, the first time the prison wall fell down, I do not think anybody would admit theirs as a really honest view.

The one waterproof place in Danafa was the Office of Posts and Telegraphs, a brick structure with a tin roof. It is understood that the reason for spending a little money and making a proper house for the Posts and Telegraphs is that when rain gets into the batteries they won't work; whereas it is well known that a European officer does better and better the wetter he is kept. The Danafa P. and T. Office boasted also a cement floor—because of the necessity of preserving the sacks of mail.

and the feet of the native telegraph operators from the ravages of white ants. The office was rather an important one—two lines joined there, and for a distance of three miles or so these ran along a common line of poles. In the course of this three miles a river, our Danafa River, was crossed: from bank to bank, say half a mile, with a volume of water varying from a clear bright blue trickle, that you could walk through in December, to a brown and yellow horror eight hundred yards wide, slipping along at seven or eight miles an hour, bearing trees and dead beasts along with it, in August. Two or three “islands”—sand with grass on top—lay about in the fairway, and these were utilised to bed the telegraph poles in. “Islands” of this sort, in a river of this sort, lead a very precarious existence. They change shape and size every time the river rises; and an old-established island, one of four or five years’ standing, with shrubs on it, may disappear in a single night. And new ones spring up similarly, though of course it takes time for the grass and things to come. There are some people who think that it is not wise to use this sort of “island” for bedding telegraph poles in. Other more knowledgeable people take the contrary view, like Shafai. Shafai was a good fellow who, in the very early days of Mohammedanism, built up a reputation as an authority on Moslem law by

always differing from Maliki, another authority, who lived and wrote a little earlier. The thing is done even in these our own days.

In 1914 the river was late in rising, and it was the end of July before there was any trouble with the telegraph line. Augustus Vavasour Harris put forth in a canoe and found that one of the “islands” holding up a pole was being nibbled away as to its upper end; the pole had fallen, and so, communication severed. Nor could anything be done with the water still rising. So the canoe was put about and started for home. The stream was running very fast, and the canoemen were not very skilful. In dodging a large tree that came down at a great rate, swinging and yawing all over the place, one paddle was lost and the canoe all but sunk. It was dark, and Augustus was very much troubled in his spirit before the outfit made the Danafa bank, a couple of miles below the Station. The interruption continued for several days.

Harris sat in his office one forenoon, colloquing with the Emir about a famine that was on at the time, listening, half to the old man’s helpless, hopeless wailing, half to the plop and plash of the rain on the bare clay outside, when a horse came pounding along, slithered the last few yards, and pulled up at the door. Out of the saddle rolled a drenched and draggled person—turban coming undone, gown all awry,

spattered all over with mud—who tumbled into the office. The fellow was past talking, but managed to hand over a large packet. It contained telegrams, a hundred or more, that should have reached Danafa four days earlier: owing to the breakdown of the telegraph line they had all stuck at a station a hundred and fifty miles away, and this tired, wet horseman had brought them. He kept changing horses on the way, but the going was awful; it rained all the time, there were four serious rivers to cross, and scores of miles of swamp. The messages told Augustus, four days late, that war with Germany was a fact, that troops were moving on Danafa as a concentration point from half a dozen places, that—oh well, heaps and heaps of questions, orders, advice, demands. Harris sat and read the lot through, and then read them through again. Then he turned the lot into the office basket and got to work.

Late in the day, the river being gone down considerably, the native telegraph workmen got the line open again. They retrieved the pole from a couple of feet of water and stuck it into a place where the mud looked less soft than elsewhere. This enabled Harris to send on all the news to a frontier station another hundred and fifty miles on, where our people and the French were closely in touch. Also he sent a message to various Authorities saying that the line across

the river was hopeless, and would go for good the next time the stream rose: and that when it did go, he meant to shift the Office and the Operators—the whole outfit—across the river, and try and join up afresh on the far side. This he did because he was cunning. He thought that one or other of the Authorities so addressed would wire back and say, “Don’t do anything of the kind,” or, “Righto, carry on.” None of them, of course, did anything of the sort: they were all more cunning than Harris, as of course was only to be expected: their wages were much higher. One secret of success is this: if you have a junior who will take risks, let him. If he succeeds and it comes off—well, he acted with your implied consent; if he fails and comes down—well, he acted without any authority.

However, Augustus Vava-sour didn’t lose any sleep because nor Veto nor Approval came along; the days and nights were too full. There was a famine in the land at that time, and there were floods, and carriers had to be found, food collected and spaced out in depots along the roads, horses bought, ferries established, and thousands of other things done. The Emir’s contribution was about a pint and a half of tears, and after the old fraud had shed these, he went back to his house, and was no more seen of Harris for some weeks.

A great many people sent

wires: the senders mostly concealed themselves behind such names as "Expeditionary Force Headquarters," "Staff Officer for Transport, Dakuna," "Adjutant So-and-So," &c. &c. It took Augustus some time to learn that generally the bigger the name, the smaller the man hiding behind it. One budding Bérthier found out that there was a river at Danafa, so he sent a lot of wires; in one he said it would be necessary to provide a ferry for those troops who had to get across the river; in another he said that canoes would be used for this service, and were to be provided; in a third he pointed out that large canoes were preferable; then he repeated and insisted upon his points, and exhorted Augustus to spare no expense, as Government would pay. To all these stout fellows and glib compounders of wires at the Bases, Harris returned, when absolutely necessary, suitable and soothing answer, such as "Your Zk/1614/8/14. noted: this is being done." As a rule it wasn't, but the correspondents had to be quieted somehow. For a day or two the plan worked admirably. Then the wirers got brain waves, saw the folly of their first orders, saw that Harris said he was carrying them out, and began straightway to panic terribly, in code, to get him back on to the right path. Thus was the latter state of that young man worse than the first. And so let this stand to us as an example of how and why it

does not pay to say the thing which is not. Mixed in with all the hot air messages were half a dozen a day that really mattered: those passing between our own Headquarters and the French, for example. And Headquarters wanted to know how and when troops got to Danafa, and sent orders for them. Augustus *made* time for it, and voyaged across the river, penetrated a mile inland, found the telegraph line, and prospected a site for the office. Anything within half a mile of the stream was barred by swamps. Past that the ground rose and grew stony, and Augustus found a place that looked good. It was what they call in our part of Africa "orchard bush." There were no houses and no labour anywhere near. So labour was ferried across in the most absurd and dangerous of canoes on earth, and got to work cleaning a half acre and making a path from it towards the water side. Ye labour was not enthusiastic. It did not like the crossing, and it would not stay all night because it complained of lions. A lucky thing happened about this time. The house of the O.C. Troops in Danafa fell down. The owner was not in it at the time, and the grass and poles from the thatch were carefully convoyed across the river, and there took on the forms of three small round huts for the staff and one coffin-shaped one, into the fabric whereof entered also two old tarpaulins and a part-worn tent, for the instruments and

things. And before the week was out the river came up again, and one night away went three poles and a hundred and fifty yards of the line, this time for good.

Now there was in Danafa an excellent good fellow, a prospector to trade. He had been a seafaring man, and no mean nor unsuccessful mahogany poacher in his day. For a time it was quite a good profession. You arrived off a coast town after dark. You found there a ship loading mahogany — strings of logs towed out from the beach behind a tug. You put your poacher over the side into a small launch, and he presently came back with a good big log out from the end of the string behind the tug. You hoisted this log in-board, and your carpenter took it in hand, cutting marks out and digging marks in, &c.; and when you got to Liverpool there was money for everybody — more money or less money, according as your poacher had got a lot or not a lot of logs. It will be noted that to be a good logwood poacher requires some pluck and handiness and brains. The lad at Danafa had been commandeered *ad dum* by Mr Harris at the start; and the pair of them, neither knowing the first littlest thing about telegraph or other electrical instruments, had discussed the problem of shifting the whole telegraph office in the light of such lawless and other experiences as they possessed.

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Arriving at the telegraph place soon after dawn, in a cheering, chilly grey down-pour, they paraded the strength of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. There was a pair of black clerks, in trousers, operators, speakers of English; there was a small sturdy fellow called Ojo, with a spanner, but no trousers, and no word of English—he was called a Patrol Gang Headman; and there were two nondescript savages without trousers, or tools, or English—the Patrol Gang. Of this collection the two clerks were the most useless. They said the line was broken, that they could not mend it, and could not advise in any way as to how anybody else should mend it: they were quite sure that any attempt to move the office could only result in damage that would take months to put right; they had put in a good deal of overtime during the past week, and what about extra pay? The quarters assigned to them were not rain-proof, and could anything be done about that? Living in Danafa was very expensive, food scarce and hard to get, and if the line were left alone no doubt in a few weeks the Department (a much more blessed word, and one of greater comfort, than Mesopotamia) would send up qualified people and put it to rights. Thus the two clerks. Harris told them to sit down and put it into writing. Ojo and his Gang said they could climb up a pole, could mend a broken wire,

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could dig a pole up out of the ground, and knew how to fix one in the ground. Augustus said to the Mate, "What about it?" the Mate said, "Righto," and it was so.

The first thing tackled was an enormous table, about three yards by two yards. This was dotted about with tappers and buzzers and dials and things, all screwed down. Connected with these things were numberless wires bound round with red cotton which went away under the table: some went outside the office, through a hole in the wall: others went off into a shed-like annexe alongside and vanished into square jars ranged row upon row. There were several tiers of these jars, and a good many jars to the tier, and the wires straggled in and out of them and all about them: the first look inside that shed was rather dismaying. Outside in the rain the prospect wasn't encouraging; there was a pole too many, it seemed, and it was some time before it became clear to Augustus and the Mate that this was a gadget for dealing with lightning, a bothersome thing with a great square metal plate buried ever so far down in the ground, and wire-guys all round to keep the thing upright. Then, too, the wires from the office joined up into two thick ones, and found their ways up to the lines carried on the poles. An unpleasant prospect for a pair of amateurs on a wet morning. Harris felt that unless he burned his boats quickly, he

and the other man would be embarking and sailing away from the enterprise. So Ojo and Co. were set on to dig out the lightning-conductor.

Himself and the Mate went inside, and started there. First they drew a key-plan of the table, showing the position of each instrument thereon: then they tabbed each instrument. After that they tabbed each of the wires with a label which had a number. Then they stuck labels on all the battery jars, and then they unshipped the lot. Augustus Vavasour carried on with this tabbing and labelling: the Mate performed marvels without. He collected planks and boxes and a pair of steps and a couple of sheets of corrugated iron. With all these he set up a contraption that looked like the thing wire-rope walkers play about on before they get on to the wire. He tied knots with wire and with rope, and all the time as he worked he discarded one article of clothing after another. Also he had in his mouth—he was a wee man—an enormous pipe packed tightly with small cubes of very black disagreeable-looking tobacco. This resolutely refused to burn, but the Mate took an "easy" every now and then, and these times of rest he devoted to lighting it. Augustus came out into the open and found his colleague perched atop of his contraption of planks, boxes, corrugated iron, and the steps, high up in the air, clad chiefly in a helmet and a singlet, balancing him-

self and pipe on a level with the wire, and enormously keen and busy with pincers and spanners and wire-cutters and Heaven knows what besides. It was an inspiring sight, the Mate thus engaged. Ojo and the Gang were doing great things with the lightning-conductor, and Augustus saw that now, indeed, the boats were well and truly burned—and Forrard On the only game.

Meantime all the canoes available, seven, had been poled with immense labour up from the town, and now bobbed and tugged at the bank fifty yards below. The trousered clerks watched the dismantling with horror, having done all in their power to prevent it. One said he wasn't well and wished to retire to his quarters. They were told to go, the pair of them, and collect whatever of their personal gear they wanted to take across the river with them. Then they wept. Later they said that it wasn't the least bit of use carting all the stuff across, because directly the rain or river or other water got into the battery jars, all would be over, and everything spoiled. Harris put the two into a canoe, but the Mate interfered, and put them into different canoes, because, he said, "it's very likely that one or two of the canoes will sink, and we ought to keep one clerk in case we want him." By eleven A.M. the fleet was loaded up, and about that time the Mate, and Augustus Vavasour, and Ojo and the Gang, and

the two trousered ones, and the lightning-conductor and the instrument table, embarked, cast off, and occupied the deep.

Harris had let the Mate select a canoe, and then followed him into it. It was probably the least crazy of the bunch. The current, according to the Mate, ran in places at ten knots: Augustus thought he was going to be drowned, and wished he had left the telegraph line and its troubles to the Post and Telegraph Department. Within a couple of minutes the fleet was scattered all over the broad bosom of the stream. The passage took an hour: after the first ten minutes it lost a good deal of its alarmingness, though Augustus for one was greatly relieved to get out safely on the far bank. The Mate finished all his own matches and most of Harris's on the voyage, and one of the crew asked him for a bit of his baccy: your native smokes a very vile native mixture of tobacco, sand, and horse-dung, but the fellow recognised that the stench and pungency of the Mate's brand went far beyond those of any native product, and he wanted some of this wonderful stuff. Augustus translated the request, and warmly supported it.

The landing-place was a sort of ledge or shelf of mud, fortunately in a creek, where the current ran not at all. The gear was unshipped, and a move made towards the new office. An initial difficulty came from the fact that the river in ris-

ing had covered the new path to a depth varying from six inches to three feet, and through this water for half a mile or more the party trudged and squelched. Fortunately the sun shone. And Augustus's faithful retainer Musa made his appearance in the clearing with biscuits and cheese and bottles of ale. The boats made one more trip that day, and then everybody returned to Danafa for the night.

Next day it poured: Harris had been up most of the night over things that he ought to have done during the day, and the parade at the water-side was late. Two of the canoes were gone, swamped, sunk, or carried away during the night. The pair of clerks, suffering and unable, they declared, to turn out. Ojo sulky and the Gang the forlornest-looking miserables you ever saw. The Mate had a sou'wester and an oilskin and a fresh lot of matches. Augustus was conscious of being neither at his best nor brightest. The clerks were collected, Ojo placated, the Gang comforted, the balance of the gear shipped, and the convoy cast off. The Fates were kind, the polers skilful, and the enterprise most lucky. They fetched up on the far side without mishap, and shoved through that half mile of swamp: not a battery jar broken, spilled, nor wetted: not the leastest instrument nor screw lost: everything fell into place like a jig-saw puzzle (*in your dreams*) does. The Mate

did wonders, and without damaging himself or anybody else, which was the chiefest wonder of all. He got his boxes and planks and steps and things fixed up, surpassed himself in the knots and hitches in rope and wire and string with which he made all stick together, disrobed, climbed to the top, and there proceeded with his mystery. Ojo and the Gang delved and sweated and strained; that lightning-conductor was a perfect nightmare of a thing. Augustus fiddled with the cells and the batteries, and the wires and the wee bits of instruments. One of the trousered brethren roused himself, and went about with a hammer and a gleaming eye; his fellow drooped more dismally than ever.

The Hammer one, when things began to look a bit ship-shape, displayed quite a little interest, even made more than one helpful suggestion. Which did not save Harris from two or three hundred small shocks whilst he was connecting up the wires and things. However, he consoled himself in this affliction with the knowledge that to this point at any rate there was yet virtue in the plant, else, whence came the stings? The outcome of it all was that, after a couple of very strenuous days, the line worked. From the new station signals were exchanged with our Eastern and Western correspondents, and Danafa was "through" on both lines, and temerity was justified of her children, Harris

and the Mate. This happened at about tea-time, but 'twas a bottle of fizzy wine that two muddy, sweaty, white men got down to in thanksgiving. *Fin. cor. op.*, and the champagne was quite cold, thanks to a day in a wet blanket in the shade.

A bottle of gin, issued as a medical comfort by Harris, whose views on Tropical Hygiene were, of course, utterly unorthodox, reconciled the two clerks to remaining in their place for the night. Once the line was working, and they'd got the gin, they brightened up wonderfully. Ojo and the Gang showed no emotions; they took what was given them, and settled down stolidly to making a fire; lions didn't worry them. That

clerk who had the hammer stated, just as Harris and the Mate were leaving, that should a lion come in the night, he (the clerk) proposed to beat him about the head and drive him away. And no doubt that is exactly how things fell out, because both clerks were present next morning, not even a scratch between them.

Authority never said a word about the move, and that, no doubt, encouraged the pair of clerks to put in an application for an enormous sum of money, which they claimed in respect of their efforts in shifting the office across the river. One hopes that their application was sympathetically and suitably dealt with.

FP.

AFTER TWO YEARS OF IT.

HOWEVER widely they might differ on certain points of detail, the prophets of two years ago were almost unanimous in declaring that the European War was to be one of comparatively short duration. As we have recently learnt from the lips of one of them, that prescient body, His Majesty's Government of 1914, were of opinion that the affair for which they had made such adequate preparations in advance would soon be over. Authorities on economics intimated—and they had been expressing the view for some years past—that under the social and industrial conditions which govern civilised communities to-day, a war between Great Powers could not be protracted beyond the space of a few months, owing to the financial exhaustion which such an upheaval would impose upon the belligerents. Military experts, official and unofficial, remembering 1866 and 1870, assumed that the conflict was to be one of rapid movements, of lightning concentrations, and of Homeric combats in the open field terminating in decisive victories; and they were practically at one in anticipating that all would be at an end before the following summer. Naval men persuaded themselves that even if Germany were not worsted on land and were not compelled to submit within a short space of time on that account, the

arch-enemy would speedily be forced to plead for terms, ground down under the intolerable burden of sea pressure. Lord Kitchener stood wellnigh alone in his opinion that the war would last for three years.

Hostilities have now been in progress for two of the three years, and yet the end is not clearly in sight. We in this country are, however, to the full as confident as we were at the outset that ours is the winning side. That same firm trust prevails in France, in Russia, and in Italy, and it prevails even in stricken Belgium and in temporarily conquered Serbia. If this trust on the part of the Allies in themselves is justified, if the fates have decreed that the Entente nations are to emerge victorious from the contest, then the portents, indicating as they do at the present time that the Central Powers are on the downward grade, justify the assumption that peace may not perhaps be quite so far off as appeared to be the case recently. Amongst the more important factors that now contribute towards giving us the upper hand ashore may be enumerated the following:—

A thorough understanding has been established between the military chiefs of the Allies. The plans of the leaders of the various armies in the different theatres of war have been co-ordinated, and they are working in accord

and close sympathy. The entire vast and complex machine represented by the fighting forces on land of the Entente is in gear, and has become capable of giving full value for the power that is being expended. This happy unification of resources and designs is however of comparatively recent date, and the benefits arising therefrom are consequently only beginning to make themselves apparent. The enemy enjoyed an enormous advantage in this respect in the early days of the war, and we must admit that the advantage was turned to excellent account. The Central Powers occupy a geographical position separating the British, French, and Italian armies from the military forces of Russia, and this must have conferred appreciable strategic benefits upon them in any case. But they reaped to the full the benefit of their geographical position as a result of the abnegation with which the discordant elements constituting the Dual Monarchy have accepted German military domination and have pocketed German insults, and in virtue of the abject submission on the part of the Sublime Porte to the behests of the German Great General Staff. It may, however, be remarked that the Bulgarian executive is showing signs of some restiveness and of a disinclination to subordinate local aims to the requirements of the general strategical situation, and that this may disturb the harmony which hitherto has served the

autocrats of the Alsen-Platz so well. Be that as it may, there is no reason why the enemy should henceforward be in a better position in respect to regulation and community of effort than the Allies, and this is undoubtedly one of the most promising features in the situation at the end of the second year of war.

Another factor of the most encouraging kind is the expansion which has taken place of late in the numerical strength of the fighting forces on our side, and which is still in progress. No such expansion has taken place in the ranks of the armies opposed to us—it seems doubtful whether any further expansion in those ranks is feasible—and it is possible that ere long contraction may begin to set in. The evolution of a huge army within the limits of the British Empire, of a huge army capable of taking the field, has necessarily proved to be a protracted process. This, be it noted, has not been due solely to the difficulty of getting together and fitting out for war the requisite numbers of men in a country wedded to the voluntary system, a country furthermore which has been somewhat leisurely in recognising the gravity of the issue and the need for national effort. The long time which has elapsed in preparation—and the lessons of the operations in face of the enemy since early in 1915 are conclusive on this point—is also to be attributed to the fact that newly formed troops, no matter

how good may be the raw material of which they are composed, take many months of initiation in the field before they are fit to meet a soldiery of the best quality in combat. The expansion of the Russian hosts has likewise proved to be a protracted process, but it has been protracted for a different reason. The resources in *personnel* within the Tsar's dominions are so great as to be virtually inexhaustible. But munitions have been wanting, rifles, guns, and ammunition; and this brings us to the consideration of a third factor now tending to give the Allies that superiority in the means of making war which is essential if they are to triumph in the end.

The enemy has up till now enjoyed a decided advantage in respect to armament, partly in consequence of better preparation in advance, partly as a consequence of more skilful organisation of industries since the war began, and partly in consequence of the United Kingdom being called upon to supply an incomparably larger army with weapons and ammunition than the army which it had maintained in peace time or had contemplated before the emergency arose. It may be observed that this last point was unaccountably overlooked at the time when those who were responsible for the furnishing of munitions in this country were being held up to scorn last year. The comparisons that were then made between the results of our efforts in output and the

results being obtained in France and Germany, took no account of the multiplication in the number of units to be equipped then in progress in the United Kingdom, and which had no counterpart in the countries that were being taken as a standard. Those comparisons were misleading and unjust, and it is charitable to assume that their authors, some of whom posed as experts, erred in ignorance. Our difficulties in respect to munitions are now at least in a fair way to being overcome, if they have not indeed been entirely overcome. Matters are going well in this respect also in Russia. There the situation in regard to armaments is constantly improving, thanks to national determination, and from this it moreover follows that time is on the side of our Eastern Ally.

Then, again, the symptoms of dejection that are manifesting themselves in the ranks of the enemy troops are full of encouragement for our side. It is not only amongst the Austro-Hungarian and the Turkish soldiery, and officers, that a lowering of morale has been displaying itself. Signs of depression have also been making themselves apparent amongst the Germans, both in the western and in the eastern theatre of war, of late. Nor is it surprising that the troops opposed to the forces of the Entente should begin to feel disheartened. The Ottoman warriors, stubborn fighters as they are, see no prospect whatever of wresting Erzerum and

Trebizond out of the hands of the Russians, or of ejecting the British out of lower Mesopotamia, or of accomplishing that conquest of Egypt of which their German leaders boasted so prematurely. Considerable fractions of the armies of the Emperor Francis Joseph have at no stage of the proceedings evinced great stomach for the broil; his legions have suffered severely in killed and wounded, hundreds of thousands of them are now engaged in peaceful pursuits under benevolent wardenship within the dominions of the Emperor Nicholas, they detest their German taskmasters, and they have lately been undergoing rough and mortifying treatment at the hands of the formidable Russian and Italian hosts. The German troops could fairly plume themselves upon their victorious achievements last autumn. They had driven the Russians out of Poland; they had taken a hand in trampling the Serbs under foot; they held practically all Belgium and large tracts of France firmly in their grasp. But for nine months they have accomplished nothing; they have lost grievously in their frantic efforts against Verdun, they find their antagonists growing more and more formidable in numbers and in outfit from day to day, they hear from their homes of failing food supply, and, brave and patriotic as they undoubtedly are, the sting is going out of their attacks and they are no longer playing the game like a winning side.

During the past few weeks the course of operations in all theatres has been such as to add to our confidence. In the region south of the Pripet marshes, in Galicia, in the Bukovina, on the Italian frontier, and in the valley of the Somme, the cause of the Allies is in the ascendant. The somewhat belated recognition on the part of His Majesty's Government that the conduct of operations must, in this country as in other belligerent States, be left in the hands of the Chief of the General Staff, the failure of the Germans to gain control in Persia, the assembling of the resuscitated Serbian army at Salonika, the collapse of the covert support given to the Central Powers by King Constantine, the successful Arab revolt against Ottoman dominion in the Hejaz, and finally, the evidence coming to hand that our maritime restrictions on imports into Germany are beginning to cause the ruling authorities in that empire serious misgivings and the ruled serious inconvenience, are other hopeful features in the situation. This last factor contributing towards giving success to the cause of the Allies is not put at the end because it is the one of the least importance, but because it seems to call for certain observations in an article which is only intended to deal with some military aspects of the European War.

One sees it stated in the Press from time to time that if our Navy had been given a

free hand in connection with stopping supplies proceeding, or apparently proceeding, to Germany, from the outset, the war would have been over by this time. Even if we admit that the interests of neutrals can be wholly disregarded, and that the risks involved in drastic action against them may be treated as of no account, there seems to be no sufficient warrant for this contention. Moreover, granting that the contention is justified by the facts of the case, what does it amount to? It signifies that we, who have set out to destroy German, or rather Prussian, militarism, might already have accomplished that object had we instituted a process of complete starvation in the land that we proposed to purge,—of starvation applied not merely to the fighting forces of the enemy—that would be perfectly legitimate if feasible—but applied also to the civil population, men, women, and children. Although a rigid and absolute blockade would undoubtedly inconvenience the hostile fighting forces in respect to some few articles needed for the effective prosecution of the war, such as cotton, rubber, and copper, the injury would not in itself destroy the enemy's prospects in the field.

It is conceivable that Germany might be compelled to sue for peace by the adoption of such methods of coercion. But it would be a peace tantamount merely to an ephemeral truce—a peace that would be wholly inconclusive. The peril

might be scotched, but it would not be killed. There is only one way of obliterating militarism in a nation imbued with the arrogant Prussian temperament and cursed with the abnormal Prussian mentality. That way is to beat its armies decisively by military action. This is the task which the Allies have yet to accomplish; and their sea power, however strenuously employed, will not accomplish it alone. The truth is, that the full force of maritime pressure cannot readily be brought into play against a belligerent whose territories come into contact with neutral States. Unless it is being exercised against an island that is not self-supporting, the achieving of its purpose will always be a slow process. Under the condition holding good in the present war, such restraint put in force by naval effort can only be regarded as an adjunct, and not as a decisive factor governing the issue. It is an adjunct—a valuable adjunct—in virtue of the difficulties which it must cause our adversaries in regard to certain products needed for the manufacture of warlike stores, in virtue of its damaging effect upon the financial system of enemy Powers, and in virtue of the depression which it indirectly creates in the ranks of the armies fighting against us and our Allies. But it is only an adjunct.

While there is unquestionably much that is encouraging in the situation at the present

time, it would be a great mistake for us to indulge in excessive optimism — using the expression optimism in the sense of imagining things to be more favourable than they really are. It may not indeed be out of place to say a word on this subject of optimism and of its consequences in the earlier stages of the war, because its prevalence was mischievous, and proved injurious to the cause. The writer, having been behind the scenes in the War Office for the first year and a half of the war, has been in a better position to judge of this than the majority of people in this country.

Unwarranted and even fatuous optimism has found its outlet in magnifying the resources of the Allies and minimising the resources of the enemy, in exaggerating the scope and the importance of successes gained by our side and depreciating successes gained by our antagonists, in assuming that the population of the Central Powers was starving when in reality it was merely somewhat inconvenienced by shortage of supplies, and in imagining that neutrals are very much better disposed towards us than they really are. It is not suggested that a mischievous optimism has not on occasion prevailed even in official circles, especially in the early days of the struggle. But official circles, enjoying as they do the advantage of possessing incomparably better information than is at the disposal of the Press or of the public, have natur-

ally fallen into error less than other circles. When they have fallen into such error the fault has, on the other hand, been far less excusable.

In respect to that magnification of the resources of the Allies which has delayed the putting forth of full effort in this country, there can be no harm now in admitting that the fighting potentialities of Russia at the start were originally altogether overestimated in the United Kingdom as in France. It was not known that only a somewhat disappointing proportion of the vast numbers of trained soldiers which were at the disposal of the military authorities in the empire when hostilities broke out could be mustered for the struggle, in consequence of insufficiency of war material. Nor was it expected that before many months had elapsed the Tsar's legions in the field would dwindle deplorably in numbers for lack of munitions to maintain them. The true position of affairs came to be known before long in official circles, and it had probably been realised in Germany before the war began. But the man in the street in the United Kingdom was ever picturing to himself the Russian steam-roller as moving irresistibly forward, although in those days the steam-roller had not been furnished with the fuel needed to get it into motion. He was entirely unaware that the early successes gained by the armies of the Grand Duke in Galicia would inevitably be

followed by a retirement into the heart of Russia should the enemy find himself in a position to transfer formidable forces to the eastern theatre of war. Such progress as our ally was able to make persuaded the people in this country, unaware as they were of the real state of affairs, that all was going favourably for our side; and this prejudicially affected recruiting at the very time when an ample and continuous inflow of new blood was particularly wanted.

No form of minimising the resources of the enemy has been more popular than that of representing Germany as coming to the end of her tether for want of men. This delusion has been sedulously fostered by certain military experts who contribute to the Press. Statisticians have immersed themselves in data, and have evolved figures of the most gratifying kind. Now, Germany is no doubt tending gradually in the desired direction. We, all of us, are tending in that direction. But it was already, months ago, being insisted in some quarters that Germany was in great straits on this account, and it is difficult to understand how such an idea got about—even granting that by dexterous manipulation of figures one can prove almost anything to other people, and may succeed in persuading oneself.

After all, the population of Germany is given in all our ordinary books of reference. There is no secret about it. Even those who may not be

able to obtain access to Teutonic census statistics can arrive at a very fairly correct estimate of the numbers of men of military age that existed in the country when the war began, if they will take our own census figures of males between 20 and 45 as a basis, and will add 45 per cent. Putting the thing very roughly, one may take it that between a sixth and a fifth of the population of any country will represent the number of men of military age that it has at its disposal. That makes the pool. From this pool have to be deducted the percentage (say 20 per cent) who are physically unfit for the ranks in any capacity, and the further percentage (an unknown percentage, but one that can be guessed at) who cannot be spared from their vocations even in a realm fully organised for war. From the number left, have further to be subtracted that proportion of the total casualties that may have occurred in a war which represents the men who are lost to the colours for good—it generally means about 60 per cent of the total wastage. If we are considering the case of Germany at the present time, we have to add to the figure resulting from the above calculation the young men who have grown to man's estate during the past two years. It will not be found that Teutonic resources in food for powder are by any means exhausted or are rapidly approaching exhaustion. At the same time, there can be little

doubt that the country is feeling the drain in *personnel*, and is becoming more and more inconvenienced by this drain as month follows month. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that Germany is at the end of her tether on this account—whatever may be the case in Austria-Hungary; and it is well that this should be realised. There is an idea abroad that if the Germans will only go on hammering away with offensives, we have but to offer passive resistance and they will run short of men. So they will, no doubt, if the war is to go on for years. But that is hardly a prospect to be looked forward to with equanimity, nor does it stand for a military policy in consonance with the declarations of the Allied Governments.

It would be absurd to pretend that official communiqués issued on our side have not occasionally had something to do with that constant exaggeration of the importance and scope of such successes as the Allies have brought off, and with that equally constant ignoring and depreciating of the enemy's successes, which between them have done so little good to the cause of the Entente. Nor should it be forgotten that at one or two junctures Ministers of the Crown have indulged in sanguine forecasts, which have been entirely falsified by subsequent events, but which in the meantime have misled the people. Still, the Press has been chiefly to blame. Al-

though there have been some worthy exceptions, the newspapers in this country have from a very early period of the war persistently inclined towards a wholly unwarranted optimism in respect to actual events taking place at the front. This first displayed itself on the occasion of the trifling set-back which the Germans sustained before Liége, and it has gone on ever since. Had there been less disposition to survey the operations through rose-coloured spectacles, we might well have had larger forces in the field last year, the munitions problem would probably have been more easily solved than it was, and we should in all likelihood stand to-day in a better position from the military point of view than we do. There is a clear distinction between the form of optimism which has in the past allowed the country to persuade itself that we were going to win the war easily and speedily, and the form of optimism represented by an unfaltering conviction that victory is to be our portion in the end. The one has been proved to be without justification—it has retarded the putting forth of the full strength of the nation, and it has done harm in the past. The happy prevalence of the other in all sections of the community is the surest guarantee that we are going to triumph.

Pessimism, using the word in the sense of assuming things to be worse than they are, is no less to be deprecated at

the present time than undue optimism. There can be no question but that discouraging utterances on the part of public speakers, occasional jeremiads in the Press, and the severe criticism to which our Government has (except during the first few weeks of the war) persistently been subjected, have done the cause of the Entente harm amongst neutrals. The German organisation for controlling neutral journals and neutral public opinion is elaborate, it is widespread, and it is in extremely capable hands. Excerpts from writings and sayings in the United Kingdom have frequently been turned skilfully to account by enemy agents in the United States, in the Balkans, and in Scandinavia. Often the meaning of the passages quoted has been entirely transformed owing to omission of the context. And it should be borne in mind that, whereas the pessimism manifested in some quarters last year did unquestionably help to wake the country up to the situation, and was beneficial from that point of view, the country is now awake and does not stand in need of this form of stimulus. It is, in fact, for the interest of the nation and of its Allies that things should be seen in their proper perspective, and that they should be represented as they are, no better and no worse. Nor will it prejudice our prospects of ultimate victory if it be more generally realised that those in responsible position in connection with prosecuting the war are

reasonably intelligent people, who are fortified with knowledge and information which is not at the command of outsiders. Would it be improper to hint that it might be as well to look to the present and the future, so long as the enemy is in the gate, in preference to gloating over mistakes that may have been made in the past?

Some references have been made above to the Press, and the Press in time of war is in a particularly difficult position. To begin with, a state of belligerency is not the normal condition of mankind. When hostilities break out all manner of restrictions are necessarily imposed upon newspapers, just at the very time when they have to discuss novel situations with which, at the best, they may not be very well qualified to deal. They are the servants of a public which has not the slightest hesitation in forming opinions and in rushing to conclusions about matters of which it knows nothing. For that is what perhaps seems the most surprising thing to the soldier and the sailor in the attitude of the layman in all classes and walks of society during the tremendous international contest that we are now engaged on. Most of us, when a subject with which we are not well acquainted, or with which we can claim no acquaintance at all, arouses interest—music, let us say, or mineralogy, or metaphysics—are content to confine ourselves to very guarded remarks, or

else to maintain a discreet silence. But not so the public when the subject at issue is the management of armies and fleets, the tactics of combat, the science of armament, and the other innumerable questions with which those who are controlling the conduct of the struggle have to treat. Everybody knows all about it. At the banquet in the palace of the peer, in the tea-room of the House of Commons, on the Underground, in the servants' hall, there is not one present who has not views, and who is not ready to express them. And the Press has perforce to follow suit.

The singular idea that the management of war is a perfectly simple matter, and one which is within the competence of any intelligent person, is widespread, and the writer's meaning may perhaps be illustrated by an anecdote. He was returning from Paris last autumn in a railway carriage in company with three of our foremost Cabinet Ministers, all three of them members of the War Council, and whose names are household words throughout the British Empire, are well known in the territories of our Allies, and are probably as unpopular amongst the egregious Huns as the names of any other three human creatures. They were talking about the war, and in course of conversation one of them mentioned an individual whose name was unfamiliar to the writer, but whom all three Ministers apparently knew well. He had just received a

direct commission in one of the new armies, it appeared. They expressed appreciation of his public spirit, and all agreed that he was a capable man. "Ah," said the first spokesman, "they ought to make a fellow like that a Staff officer," and the others nodded assent. Now, if it had been suggested to them that some man of ability who had suddenly taken up the profession of medicine was, simply because he possessed brains, straightway to rank as a Harley Street consulting physician, they would have laughed the idea to scorn. Two of the three had in the past not been wholly unconnected with the practice of the law: if it had been proposed to these that because a certain gentleman had finished eating his dinners—or whatever it is that those sort of people do when they are first called to the Bar—he should instantly be created a King's Counsel, seeing that he unquestionably had a head on his shoulders, they would have scouted the notion. But as it was merely the case of a man who had taken up the profession of arms in the middle of the greatest war of all time, absence of knowledge and experience in no way disqualified him from the assumption of positions which the military authorities, in their absurd way, consider can only be properly filled by persons who have been especially trained for the task, after having undergone a grounding in the practice of the soldier's calling for some years. If

civilians of light and leading, who have, moreover, been in close touch with the conduct of the war, can be from the soldier's point of view so silly, it is hardly to be wondered at that persons who have not enjoyed the same advantages during the past two years, and who are not furnished with that sumptuous intellectual equipment which is the indispensable qualification of a Cabinet Minister, are apt to fall even into worse errors.

In time of war, and especially when that war happens to be in progress in many different theatres and to be in process of execution by colossal armies, local situations, and even the general situation, are so prone to change at short notice, that it is unprofitable to discuss them in an article which cannot appear for some days after it has been written. But there are certain broad aspects of the strategical position at the present time which can be touched upon with a certain confidence.

It has already been pointed out how many features there are in the outlook which may be regarded as promising for the cause of the Allies. It is, however, in the Emperor Francis Joseph's dominions that the course of events appears at the moment to be especially encouraging from our point of view. This may tempt the amateur strategist to advocate additional pressure being administered in South-Eastern Europe by the Entente forces as a whole, with the object

of finally crushing the Dual Monarchy and of compelling that State of shreds and patches to agree to a separate peace. On a map of Europe such as is to be found in an atlas, that kind of thing looks easy enough. But even the armies of Crimean days could not be switched about across the seas, nor could they be moved through regions bare of communications, without much time being exhausted in the process. With the much greater armies of to-day, accompanied as they are by a far more retarding dead-weight of impedimenta, the preliminary operations which must take place before the troops can come to grips with the enemy will last even longer, when such plans of making war are adopted. Concentration of effort is the keynote of effective strategy; and although dispersion of force may sometimes be justifiable, and may even on occasion be dictated by the circumstances, practical considerations of time and distance and topography seem at the present juncture to discourage expenditure of resources in other than the main theatres of war.

It may be said that the initial successes gained by Germany in her *Drang nach Osten* constitute so great a menace to the British Empire, and therefore to the cause of the Allies, that the Near East and the Ottoman dominions rank as a main theatre of war. It cannot be disputed that the command which the Central Powers have obtained during

the course of the war over the road leading from Hungary to Anatolia does profoundly modify their strategical position in reference to all Southern Asia. Nor can it be disputed that if that great line of hostile communications leading eastwards from continent to continent could be definitely severed at any point, be it in the Balkans or Asia Minor or even farther to the east, it would be advantageous from our point of view. But Germany is the Power whose influence and control in Asia it is incumbent upon us to put an end to, and the best way to do it is to grapple with the mischief at its source, to wipe out the German armies upon German soil, and to impose upon the beaten enemy such conditions as will put a term to the *Drang nach Osten*, and to any ideas of reviving it. Moreover, the very effective operations of the Russians in Armenia and Persia, coupled with our more modest achievements farther to the south, have already set up a formidable barrier in the way of Teutonic aspirations and of Teutonic emissaries. There are furthermore good grounds for hoping that the Arab movement, which the Shereef of Mecca has inaugurated, will in due course create fresh obstacles in the way of those who attempt to put in execution the plots and projects hatched in Berlin. The burnt child dreads the fire. His Majesty's Government have hardly enjoyed such unbroken success in the prosecution of remote strategical

ventures as to impel them towards fresh misapplications of force.

But dispersion of resources does not necessarily coincide with misapplication of force, and of this the campaigns in East Africa and in Mesopotamia are illustrations. General Smuts' brilliant operations, for instance, might, to persons unacquainted with the facts, seem to be strategically inappropriate, seeing that they obviously are absorbing considerable bodies of troops on a "side-show." But almost the whole of the contingents which have been accomplishing so much in tracts offering all manner of difficulties to military movement, are composed of officers and men who for various reasons can hardly be looked upon as available for warfare in Flanders or Picardy. There is, in fact, little analogy between the campaign for the conquest of German East Africa—an undertaking which in no way sins against the fundamental laws that govern the art of war—and the ill-fated effort to reach Constantinople last year, which meant the diversion of a large army from the primary to a secondary theatre. And the same thing may practically be said of the Mesopotamian expedition, which has aroused so much adverse comment in this country of late in consequence of the unfortunate failure to relieve Kut-el-Amara. The bulk of the troops employed out there are native Indian troops. Moreover, many, if not most, of the white sol-

diers engaged stand for that proportion of troops from home that are always associated with the native army, alike in India and when the military forces stationed in India take the field outside of it.

The collapse of the hostile undertakings attempted against Egypt from the west, the comparative ease with which all efforts of the Turks to reach the Suez Canal from the east have been beaten off, the pressure being brought to bear upon the Ottoman forces as a whole from the side of Armenia, Persia, and Lower Mesopotamia, and the absence of any serious effervescence within Egypt itself on occasions during the past few months when its Sultan's territory has been threatened from without, all pointed to causes of anxiety in this quarter having diminished even before the Arab activities began to make the Turkish position in Syria somewhat precarious. As matters now stand, it seems not unreasonable to anticipate that a considerably smaller garrison will suffice for Egypt henceforward than appeared to be indispensable up till recently. Improved conditions in that quarter should work favourably for the concentration of force in the main theatre of war, which is imperatively demanded if the British Empire is in the final stages of the conflict to play a part on land in consonance with the resolute efforts that its races are making, and commensurate with the fighting resources which it has developed. We have

transformed ourselves, thanks mainly to the foresight and determination of Lord Kitchener, within the space of two years into a great military Power—the fourth greatest military Power in the world. If we do not dissipate our strength, our armies are destined to exercise a supreme influence over the course of the struggle henceforward, and to exercise that influence at the vital point—*i.e.*, directly against Germany.

Germany is the antagonist to be trampled upon if an abiding peace is to be built up out of the ruins which Prussian lust for world-power has created. The crushing of the predominant partner in the confederacy arrayed against the Entente carries with it inevitably and automatically the downfall of the other States that are leagued against us. From every point of view—moral, military, economic, and political—the present situation demands a focussing of Allied effort upon the Germans.

The events of the past two years have taught us what these people are. We may, in pre-war days, have miscalculated their powers of organisation, we may have underestimated the amplitude of their resources, we may have been unaware of the scope of their preparations for securing the hegemony of Europe and of their determination to achieve the object of their ambitions. Still, we did realise that such a nation must inevitably prove an ex-

ceedingly tough proposition should it become incumbent upon us to grapple with it in a life-and-death struggle. What we did not realise—and what few of us indeed had any idea of—was that the German nation was a nation of barbarians, a nation without honour, without chivalry, and without shame. Normally, when one side or the other has been worsted in an encounter between civilised races, the victor is justified in granting peace on terms that are not degrading to the vanquished. He may even be well advised in doing so. But the Germans, dominated as they are by the Prussian ideal and governed as they are by Prussian ethics, can no longer be accounted a civilised race. No agreement or pact is regarded as binding by them. No treaty contracted with their sovereign Over-Lord is worth the parchment on which it is engrossed. It is for the Allies so thoroughly to overthrow them as to render them incapable of mischief for fifty years. Guarantees for their good behaviour can only be regarded as unacceptable, unless those guarantees be of the most practical and effective kind. Paper guarantees are worse than worthless when they are furnished by rogues. Such a military situation must have been set on foot by the land forces of the Entente, seconded by sea-power, as to make it immaterial whether the Teuton adheres, or does not adhere, to the provisions

of the document which will in due course be drawn up in some favoured city by the representatives of the ex-belligerents at the close of the conflict.

That is why there appear to be but slender prospects of peace for months to come. Before many weeks have passed the Germans may be prepared, and may even be eager, to agree to terms on the basis of the *status quo*. They may peradventure be willing to acknowledge that their colonies are lost to them and to offer spontaneously the restoration to France of portions of Lorraine. Also, no doubt, they will undertake to bear philosophically such inconveniences as the friends whom they have betrayed may be called upon to suffer. But accommodations of that character will not serve the purpose of the Entente. We must have done with this thing. In the negotiations assented to by our side for putting an end to the strife, it must be no question of parties to a quarrel bargaining on more or less level terms. It must be a case of the representatives of the victorious Powers announcing the conditions that they impose, and of their inviting the German delegates to accept these without qualification, on pain of instant resumption of hostilities. We are dealing with a wild beast that has to be caged, and that has to be kept in a cage until it is tamed.

CHAS. E. CALLWELL.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE REPORT OF LORD HARDINGE'S COMMISSION—MR ASQUITH
AND HOME RULE—OUR UNION WITH IRELAND—LORD HALDANE
DISCOURSES OF EDUCATION.

THE report presented to His Majesty the King by the Royal Commission on the rebellion in Ireland unfolds a remarkable tale of criminal negligence and impotent cynicism. It affords no loophole of escape for Mr Birrell or for his master, the Prime Minister. They erred not by accident but by design. They preferred the gambler's throw to the prevision of the statesman. They followed the same policy in Ireland which Mr Asquith and Lord Haldane and Sir Edward Grey followed in the wider field of Europe. They shut their eyes resolutely, and pretended that what was bound to happen could not happen. It was a policy after their own heart—easy and profitable. It saved a vast deal of trouble, and it did not disturb the plan which they loved best of buying Radical votes with public money.

When Mr Birrell first laid an inept finger upon Ireland, that country was enjoying such a period of peace and prosperity as she had not enjoyed for six hundred years. In other words, she had known the benefit of resolute government, and had captured the happiness which comes of security. And then Mr Birrell, that he might play with advantage the game of politics, involved her in ruin and re-

bellion. That he will have plenty of time in an enforced and perpetual retirement to reflect upon his crimes and misdemeanours might profit his soul, were politicians capable of repentance. It cannot profit Ireland, which must bear the shame of treachery and bloodshed unto the end of time, because in her folly she was flattered by the false promises and irrelevant humour of Mr Birrell.

The plain record of events furnished by the Royal Commission reveals the depths of our Government's infamy. Before the war began it had governed Ireland by the simple expedient of suspending government altogether. No check was imposed upon the law-breaker. Everybody did as he chose, or as Mr Redmond told him. The members of the English Cabinet lay prone at the feet of the Irish dictator. Nor did they trouble to stand upright when war was declared against Germany. They thought it expedient to put no check upon disloyalty, and to give the rebels of Ireland every opportunity of conferring with our enemies. The Irish Volunteers and the Citizen Army were almost encouraged to rebel. "It is now a matter of common notoriety," says the report, "that the Irish Volun-

teers have been in communication with the authorities in Germany, and were for a long time known to be supplied with money through Irish-American societies. This was so stated in public by Mr John M'Neill on the 8th November 1914. It was suspected long before the outbreak that some of the money came from German sources."

Thus with open pertinacity the rebels espoused the cause of our foe. After the outbreak of war there was a momentary feeling of enthusiasm among the Irish for the success of the British arms. There was at the outset no lack of recruits. But the Sinn Feiners soon put an end to the expression of patriotism. M'Neill, with six others, issued a public manifesto condemning Mr Redmond, and regretted that Sir Roger Casement's absence prevented him from putting his signature to a piece of printed disloyalty. Nor was this all. They instantly set about procuring arms and drilling their friends. And Mr Birrell complacently closed his eyes. If ever there was an hour for action, that hour had arrived. "It was of paramount importance," the Commissioners tell us, "that after the outbreak of the present war no opportunity should have been given for the drilling and arming of any body of men known to be of seditious tendency, and no other consideration should have interfered with the enforcing of this duty." No other consideration did interfere, save Mr Birrell's

idleness and Mr Redmond's perversity. Mr Birrell cannot plead ignorance; he cannot plead impotence. He would have been supported in whatever steps he had taken towards law and order by the whole country. But he had his orders, and watched the growth of sedition with the detachment of a half-curious spectator. He had not long to wait. A flood of traitorous literature was poured over the country, and little or no attempt was made to dam it. The Irish Parliamentary Party objected, it was said, to the suppression of newspapers. And when the Defence of the Realm Act was so modified that any British subject could claim the right to trial by jury for offences against it, the Irish Executive, even if it had wished to administer the law, was rendered powerless.

Meanwhile Mr Redmond and his friends were not idle. "One unfortunate thing," said Major Price in his evidence, "which hindered us a good deal, was the attitude of the Official Nationalist Party and their Press. Whenever General Friend did anything strong in the way of suppressing or deporting these men [the organisers] from Ireland, they at once deprecated it, and said it was a monstrous thing to turn a man out of Ireland." And Mr Birrell, of course, came blithely to heel. No wonder the traitors grew in courage and insolence. Where no restraint was put upon them, they saw no reason to practise reticence or conceal-

ment. A journal, called 'The Workers' Republic,' announced its purpose with all the candour of effrontery. "The Irish Citizen Army," announced this ineffable sheet, "was the first publicly organised armed citizen force south of the Boyne. Its constitution pledged, and still pledges, its members to work for an Irish Republic and for the emancipation of labour." That is clear enough, we should have thought, even for a politician to understand; it did not arouse Mr Birrell from his lethargy.

Again and again practical and definite warnings were given of impending revolt. As early as September 1914 the Dublin Metropolitan Police told the truth to the deaf ears of the Government. "There is no doubt," thus ran its statement, "that, so far as Dublin is concerned, the majority of the Irish National Volunteers would follow the lead of the extreme section, and hints have been given that they are not without hope of being able to assume and establish control of the Government of Ireland before the present difficulties are over, and that they may attempt some escapade before long." Throughout the year 1915 disquieting reports were presented to the Government. They came from Dublin, and Wexford, and Tyrone, and they met all of them with the same reception. Then evidence accumulated that the Clan-na-Gael of America was in the closest confidence of the Sinn Fein, that it was sending money

over to help in a campaign of disloyalty. In May 30, 1915, a resolution submitted to the Irish Volunteers, in favour of an immediate insurrection, was defeated only by the casting vote of Professor McNeill. So bold were the rebels that they boasted they were no secret society like the old Fenians, and made as little concealment of their purposes as of their friendships. But they could not persuade the English Government to believe them.

So the grim story is told of inselence on one side, of cynicism on the other. Mr Redmond, knowing well that the situation was serious and menacing, still persisted in making glowing comparisons between Ireland and Great Britain in the matter of crime. The Under-Secretary, on the 18th December 1915, sent an urgent and unavailing letter to the Chief Secretary. "New measures," said he, "possibly requiring additional police at the ports, will be required to counter the attempts (of the Volunteers), and unless in other matters we keep these revolutionaries under observation, we shall not be in a position to deal with the outbreak, which we hope will not occur, but which will undoubtedly follow any attempt to enforce conscription, or, even if there is no such attempt, might take place as a result of continual unsuccess of the British Arms." Thus wrote the Under-Secretary to Mr Birrell, and he might have spared his paper and his ink. For the Chief Secretary, acting under orders, was wholly im-

pervious to sights and sounds. He said nothing; he did nothing; he did not desire to say or do anything. Like the rest of his colleagues, he believed that there was no evil he could not cure by pretending that it was not there. And so he drove Ireland on to the rocks of rebellion without thought or care.

When the Under-Secretary had issued his warning, Lord Midleton most patriotically assumed the task of telling the truth to the Government. He made speeches in the House of Lords. He demanded and obtained an interview with the Prime Minister. He argued the matter with Sir Matthew Nathan, and he confronted Lord Wimborne with the facts. He might as well have spoken to walls or stones. These, who should have taken steps to protect the United Kingdom, resolutely refused to move a finger. Their natural love of inaction chimed precisely with the orders given them by their superior, Mr Redmond. And as for Lord Wimborne, who appears to have been willing to deal with some of the ringleaders, "he was unable to move further," we are told, "owing to the general attitude of the Government towards Ireland which it was impossible to disturb."

Nor would that attitude ever have been disturbed if Ireland had not publicly joined hands with Germany, and risen in rebellion against the properly constituted authorities. Neither Mr Redmond nor Mr Birrell could pursue

their favourite policy of the ostrich, when the rebels of Dublin used the soft-nosed bullets of Germany foully to murder British soldiers for no other reason than that they were doing their duty. Such, in brief abstract, is the substance of the Commissioners' report, and history cannot show its parallel. The conclusions which are drawn from the report must be accepted by all right-thinking men. "The main cause of the rebellion," we are told, "appears to be that lawlessness was allowed to grow up unchecked, and that Ireland for several years past has been administered on the principle that it was safer and more expedient to leave law in abeyance if collision with any faction of the Irish people could thereby be avoided." This was the heroic policy of our timid, worn-out, old "indispensables." They could not govern themselves; they refused to let others govern. They were like so many cuttle-fishes, who had darkened the waters about them, and who hoped that, if they could not see, they might themselves remain unseen. But at last their wicked impotence has been brought to light, and the day of reckoning shall not be deferred for ever.

Meanwhile the Commissioners have sketched briefly what steps should have been taken to preserve the peace in Ireland. The Government should have prevented the importation of arms into Ireland; it should have repressed seditious utterances, written or spoken,

and if juries and magistrates refused to enforce the policy of repression, as indeed they did, further powers should have been invoked under the existing Acts for the Defence of the Realm. Of course our supine Government did none of these things. Its policy was, say the Commissioners, "the negation of that cardinal rule which demands that the enforcement of law and the preservation of order should always be independent of political expediency." And thus we arrive at the real crime of our governors. To political expediency they subordinated the safety of the country, the welfare of the Empire. Messrs Asquith and Birrell cared as little for the security and prosperity of Ireland as they cared for the defence of Great Britain against the aggression of Germany. Political expediency—that was the sole God to whom they bent the knee, at whose altars they burned the incense of worship. Keep us in office, O expediency, they cried, and expediency granted their prayer at a price to the strength and happiness of the British Empire, which three generations of men will be powerless to pay.

They have kept their places and drawn their salaries, these men, and they have obeyed Mr Redmond. Meanwhile, law and order have paid the penalty exacted by political expediency. Had Messrs Asquith and Birrell ever thought of what they were leaving undone, had they ever looked forward to the inevitable result of their in-

action, they might perchance have understood that expediency was not the politician's only guide. Especially wicked is it to place law beneath expediency in a democratic State. For the democratic State, having no natural safeguards, and having dragged down all the barriers which wisdom has raised to protect the "people" against itself, demands above all strict obedience. If it impose not respect for the law, then it descends instantly to anarchy, and makes bloodshed and rebellion certain. It is not difficult, therefore, to affix the label of crime upon the guilty persons. Mr Asquith, as Prime Minister, cannot escape the condemnation of his fellows. He put Mr Birrell where he should not have been, and doubtless, in concert with Mr Redmond, told him what policy he deemed expedient. But upon Mr Birrell lies the immediate burden of obloquy and reproach. "We are of opinion," say the Commissioners, "that the Chief Secretary, as the administrative head of Your Majesty's Government, is primarily responsible for the situation that was allowed to arise and the outbreak that occurred."

These are plain words, from which there is no escape. For the hundreds of innocent lives that have been lost, for the rivers of blood that have flowed, for unnumbered cowardly assassinations, Mr Birrell is "primarily responsible." He was appointed by his King to discharge a certain duty; he has refused to discharge it, on

no better plea than that of political expediency. The motive does but enhance the crime. And the report of Lord Hardinge's commission can have but one logical result: impeachment. If a soldier neglects his duty on the field of battle he is sent before a court-martial. Why should a politician, whose reward and responsibility are alike great, be permitted to evade the consequences of his neglect or his indolence? The high crimes and misdemeanours of Mr Birrell have been examined before an impartial tribunal, which cannot be taxed with partisan bias or political animosity, and the tribunal finds him primarily responsible for bloodshed and revolt, trebly wicked, because the blood was shed and the revolt occurred when we were at war with a foreign power. No wonder Mr Asquith finds it inexpedient to discuss the report of the Royal Commission. But silence will not always be imposed upon an unwilling House of Commons. Peace will one day return to the world, and we shall neither have a respectable Government nor deserve one unless we bring to justice the Ministers who have betrayed their trust, and been responsible, primarily or secondarily, for open sedition.

Mr Asquith, whose vanity has fashioned a new maxim, "the Prime Minister can do no wrong," is not one whit abashed. With characteristic nonchalance he has followed up his famous visit to Ireland with an instant promise of Home Rule. In Dublin, we

are told, that he shook hands with the Sinn Feiners, and thus gave a presage of his intentions, since it is to the Sinn Feiners, the declared allies of Germany, that he will hand over the government of Ireland. Mr Redmond's intervention, as we all know, is wholly inapposite. In the tragi-comedy of Ireland he plays no other part than that of the pantaloon, and if by ancient habit he is still able to intimidate Mr Asquith, he has lost all the influence that ever he had in his own country. As the writer of a rebellious letter put it a few months ago, "Redmond is done for." And Mr Asquith, in making terms with him, is negotiating with one who can bind nobody and who speaks only for himself.

Mr Asquith's motives are inscrutable. He is permitted by a docile Coalition and a gagged House of Commons to do what he will without excuse or explanation. We are at war with a powerful and implacable foe, who has done his best to stir up rebellion in Ireland, and has succeeded perhaps beyond his hopes. We know, and have known for years, that there exists in Ireland a well-armed, well-drilled body of rebels ready and eager to join hands with the Germans against Great Britain. On Easter Day last the Irish rebels, with the help of their German allies, raised the standard of revolt, proclaimed a republic, murdered hundreds of gallant soldiers in the streets of Dublin, and as a speedy recompense

are offered self-government by Mr Asquith. If it had not happened, the thing would be incredible. Nor does Mr Asquith make the situation one whit more easy to understand by the meagre statement which he vouchsafed to the House. For what has happened he found no word of apology. He states, what is untrue, that the present circumstances could not have been foreseen. Not only were the circumstances foreseen, but for two years constant warnings have been given to Mr Asquith and Mr Birrell. And then Mr Asquith proceeds to insist upon an immediate measure of Home Rule, on the ground that we have now a unique, a golden opportunity "of a joint effort to attain agreement as to the way in which the government of Ireland is in the future to be carried on." A vile phrase, truly, which contains a viler confusion of ideas! A golden opportunity, indeed! Scarlet would be the more appropriate colour. And why unique? Does Mr Asquith believe that the rebellion of Easter Day is the last that ever will occur in Ireland? He need not be downhearted. So long as politicians such as he and Mr Birrell remain to mismanage affairs and to put law and patriotism beneath the heel of political expediency, rebellions will never be wanting. Truly Mr Asquith must find a sounder reason than this for his abject surrender to the rebels if he is to pass his precious, hastily conceived Bill

through the Houses of Parliament.

Again we are told that to give Home Rule to the Sinn Feiners will in some inscrutable way help us in the conduct of the war. Thus we shall sweep the Irish question from our path, we are told, and march on to instant victory. It has even been said that those who oppose Mr Asquith's sudden resolve to break the party truce are no better than party politicians. Never was greater nonsense talked than this. They are no party politicians who see in the resolute government of Ireland the only escape from imminent danger. What is wanted in time of war is unity, not disruption. And if unity cannot be achieved by peaceful methods, then martial law must see to it that order is preserved. The issue in Ireland was simple enough. The Sinn Feiners had made terms with the Germans. Their rebellion was mercifully suppressed; Roger Casement was caught at the opportune moment; and nothing was left to do except to administer justice with a firm hand, and to ensure that there should be no recrudescence of sedition or disorder.

Had these steps been taken, Ireland might have been forgotten in a week, and the conduct of the war would have suffered no distraction. But the chance of playing politics was too good to be lost. Mr Asquith promised his Bill, and set the whole United Kingdom

by the ears. Now the Bill must be drafted, and expounded, and opposed, and criticised, and challenge the approval of Lords and Commons, and at each stage it arouses old rancours and ancient prejudices. Nothing that Mr Asquith can say or do can smooth over the necessary discussion. For he long ago lost the trust and confidence of the country, and no statement which he makes will ever be accepted without a proper test of its accuracy. So here we are, through no fault of our own, embarked upon a foolish campaign of politics, which the exercise of a little firmness might have avoided—and the fault is not the fault of Lord Selborne, who resigned rather than sacrifice his principles, nor the fault of Lord Lansdowne, who dared to tell the truth. It is the initial fault of Mr Asquith, and of none other, and he must share the brunt of reproach with these timid souls who think it the highest statesmanship to do whatever Mr Asquith tells them to do.

When Mr Asquith contrived to extirpate all opposition from the House of Commons, he proclaimed what is called "a party truce." This truce has been kept by his opponents. He and his colleagues have not respected it for an hour. When the history of these times comes to be written, it will be seen clearly that the vaunted truce was nothing more than a convenient sham. For instance, it did not prevent the Home

Rule Bill and the Bill to rob the Welsh Church from being put upon the statute-book. It preserved the Plural Voting Bill, which appears to many ardent Radicals of greater import than a victory over the Germans, in a state of suspended animation. On the other hand, the truce forbade us to object to the exemption of Mr Lloyd George's bright, inefficient young valuers, and made it a crime to urge that our British markets should be protected against the dumping of German goods after the war. And now we are thrust by Mr Asquith wantonly back into the pit of Irish politics, and we suppose that if he be opposed in the House he will appeal to the truce and charge his honest opponents with treason against the State.

If Mr Asquith were a War Minister at the head of a War Government, we might listen with some respect to his plea of unity. But he is not and never has been a War Minister. That we shall beat the Germans, and are beating them, is quite true, but we shall beat them in spite of Mr Asquith and his Cabinet. The Navy and Army are doing their duty as we knew they would. The spirit of the country is firm and resolute. Only Mr Asquith and the Cabinet, for some unfathomed reason, deliberately keep themselves below the level of a high occasion. Ever since the war began they have refrained from doing the right thing, until they were pushed into rectitude from outside.

They kept the Army short of shells, short of men, short of everything, until public opinion grew too strong for them. They have shown an inexplicable tenderness for the Germans and their interests, for which let us hope they will some day be asked to account. In brief, they have always been unable to eradicate the old habit of politics, and they may not plead, in extenuation of their misdeeds, that they are a war Government. The war, in truth, has always been a secondary enterprise in their eyes to the splendid task of keeping Mr Asquith and his colleagues in their comfortable offices. To this task they have devoted all their energies, all their ingenuities, and we have little doubt that Mr Asquith is already counting up how many votes his "spirited" Irish policy will be worth to him. But it is not to men inspired by mere selfishness that we would surrender our principles of the present, our hopes of the future. Mr Asquith is no pilot weathering the storm; he is a mere egoist, playing hard for his own hand, and England will best serve herself if she contrives to get rid of the band of opportunists, which in betraying Ireland would betray her also. We shudder when we think of the risk we have run in making war, handicapped by the folly of our Ministers. Our fear is doubled when we reflect that, if a change be not made, it will be left to politicians, such

as Mr Asquith and Sir Edward Grey, to fight England's battle at the conference of peace.

Therefore it should be our business sternly to criticise whatever measure Mr Asquith suggests. And this criticism is all the more necessary, because our leaders have gone over, bag and baggage, to the political enemy. By what arts Mr Asquith has bamboozled the Unionist members of the Coalition we do not know.

Then there are those who by a strange perversity quote the case of William Pitt for a precedent. It is true that Pitt interrupted his conduct of the French War by a piece of Irish legislation; but Mr Asquith will not earn a comparison with the man who saved England any more easily by giving Home Rule to Ireland than by taking his instructions from the Press in the management of high affairs. We see no objection to the discussion of Ireland in time of war. If the discussion keeps Mr Asquith and his House out of mischief, and secludes them from interfering in matters which they do not understand, we can only hope that the discussion may be perpetual. We see a very great objection to Mr Asquith's plan of disruption. When Mr Pitt reopened the Irish question in an hour of crisis, he did so because he was convinced that union was a paramount necessity. If Great Britain was to be saved from the French and Ireland from the consequences of her own treachery, it was im-

perative to knit close the bonds of union. Indeed, did not the Union exist to-day it would be our duty to make it. Mr Asquith has in his hands the only instrument of safety, and wantonly will he break it in pieces if he can. And his henchmen ask: Why should he not pass laws for Ireland as well as Mr Pitt? They might with equal sense suggest that, since it is a wise measure to enrol soldiers in time of war, Mr Asquith would be justified in disbanding the British Army.

The history of Ireland, which never changes, should convince even the unwary that it is hopeless to attempt to conciliate the Sinn Feiners with a promise of self-government. The small measure that Mr Asquith would mete out to them is of no use whatever to them. What they want, as we all know, is a republic and a firm alliance with the Germans. That is precisely what their ancestors wanted in the last century. Emmet spoke no less than the truth when he said that it was the purpose of himself and his friends "to dissolve the connection with Great Britain, to accept France only as an ally, and to establish Ireland as an independent kingdom." Change "France" for "Germany," and you have expressed in identical terms the aspiration of James Conolly. Yet Emmet lived and rebelled with a complete system of Home Rule, under which, said Grattan, "Great Britain gave up *in toto* every claim to

authority over Ireland." The surrender of Great Britain mattered not a jot to Emmet and his friends. Where they had no grievance they invented one, and still found what they thought was Ireland's opportunity in England's danger. In 1798 the drama was played with the same actors and the same properties as were conspicuous this year. Ireland, for all her pretence, sadly lacks invention. Matthew Tone, whose part was lately taken by the man Casement, accompanied the French to Killala, and thus he told the story. "Yesterday evening we landed," he wrote, "and drove sixty Yeoman and regulars before us like sheep. A few of our grenadiers only were engaged. We killed two and made a dozen prisoners. The people will join us in myriads; they throw themselves on their knees as we pass along, and extend their arms for our success. We will be masters of Connaught in a few days. *Erin go Bragh.*" Alas for the futility of Irish hopes! "In a few days" Matthew Tone was hanged, and his brother escaped the gallows only by suicide. Such was an episode in Ireland's history, when she "enjoyed the blessings" of Home Rule, and cheered the traitorous folly of the Peep-of-Day Boys and Defenders. Pitt put an end to her seditious practices by the Act of Union, and now Mr Asquith, believing apparently that any change must be for the better, would further

weaken the Government, which Mr Birrell's indolence has paralysed, by rendering it still easier for the Irish to make plots with Germany. And we are at war!

William Pitt, therefore, may not be quoted as a convenient precedent for Mr Asquith. What he did was not dictated by the mere love of novelty or by a sudden whim. He aimed at the security of the Empire, and he knew that security could be attained only by union. What he thought and knew remains true even to this day. Had not Messrs Asquith and Birrell reduced the art of government to an absurdity, had they not, by refusing to disarm rebels or to suppress seditious prints, connived at rebellion, there would have been no trouble in Ireland. And the remedy for the peril which exists is not to increase Ireland's opportunity of revolt, but to take up again the duty of fair and honest governance, which for ten years has been laid aside. Had we not had a long experience of Mr Asquith's inconsequence, his proposal would seem wholly unintelligible. But we know that he cares only for the expedients of the demagogue, and no doubt he thinks that "Home Rule" is as good a cry as another. Before we part with him, may we suggest that he carry his folly to its logical conclusion, and appoint Roger Casement, duly enlarged, as a fitting successor to Mr Birrell? Casement has all the qualities which should endear

him to the Radical heart: he is a rebel and a sentimentalist, and he would be received in Dublin with acclamation. Moreover, he has another advantage, which cannot be gainsaid: his titles of honour have been stripped from him. Not long since, when Sir Edward Grey was raised to the peerage by the grace of his Sovereign, an official Radical asserted that he had made a great sacrifice. We remember that Lord Haldane, too, proved his tact by apologising for the honour which the King did him when a viscountcy was conferred upon him. Casement is now disgraced by no order and by no title. He has been relieved of the "sacrifice" which once, poor man, he was asked to make. Can he be any longer held back from promotion?

Meanwhile our Radical demagogues find it difficult to make up their minds about a theory of politics. They assume that the voice of the People is the voice of God, that they themselves are not leaders but obsequious interpreters of the popular will, and then when the sacred mob grows weary of them, they refuse to accept the condemnation of their masters. Here, for instance, is Lord Haldane, who is unable to keep the silence imposed upon him by the public opinion which he professes to respect. He must know perfectly well that he has lost the confidence of the country. It is not that he is much worse than his confederates Mr Asquith and Sir

Edward Grey, but he is revealed more clearly than they for what he is. It is not yet forgotten that he once altered a speech of his own making while it was on its way to Hansard. For many years he openly applauded Germany, even though he had discovered the designs she harboured against us. He posed, in fact, as the Kaiser's spokesman in the British Isles, and while he covered our enemy with flattery, he took care to keep the English people in the dark. These offences the democracy, dull of apprehension as it is, and slow to anger, cannot forget or forgive. It is tired of Lord Haldane, and would feel easier in its mind if he retired into the obscurity which his misdeeds have earned for him. But obscurity irks him, and he must needs come forward to tell the country, which he allowed to drift unprepared into war, how it shall re-gather its strength in time of peace. Nor can he complain if the Duke of Buccleuch suggested, at the outset, that the noble Viscount "should explain his past conduct in misleading Great Britain on the German danger, and in misleading Germany on British policy." Lord Haldane, protesting that he desired all the facts to be brought out, found it inexpedient to reply to the Duke of Buccleuch. It seemed easier to call attention to "the training of the nation and to the necessity of preparing for the future." Had he urged the nation to pre-

pare a few years before it would have been more to the point.

Upon education Lord Haldane affects, without warrant, to speak as an expert, and all that he can recommend is that we should imitate the German system. When we have defeated the Germans we must be taught by the enemy. The Germans have profited by the services of thousands of trained chemists. Therefore we must all be chemists, and make poisoned gas. Now if the war has taught us anything, it should have convinced us that the uniformly-drilled masses of Germany lag far behind the English in quickness of initiative and variety of talent. It is becoming clearer every day that we profit enormously by not driving all our citizens through State-directed schools. We have no desire to imitate the gross materialism, which has been at once the inspiration and the result of German teaching. We still believe that variety is far superior to uniformity, and that education is better employed if it turn out men than if it produce annually so many thousands of bakers and butchers and chemists. To tell a boy of ten that he must do nothing, learn nothing, hope nothing which will not be of use to him in his future career, is not to reform education but wantonly to retard the progress of the race.

For the making of men fit to govern others, to bear the burden of empire, to under-

stand the art and meaning of life, no better subject has been than that which is known as "the humanities." They have stood the test of centuries, and they have not failed us. It is easy for the narrow-minded men of science to sneer at the classics, which are beyond their reach, on the ground that there is no money in them; but the classics have given us something, which the Germans lack and will always lack, and we should be foolish indeed, as well as ungrateful, if we renounced them in obedience to the utilitarian. We cannot think without horror of a race trained only to be chemists and physiologists. Sir Walter Scott, to whom we owe a far greater debt than to any of our men of science, put the case perfectly in a few lines. "I am no great believer," said he, "in the extreme degree of improvement to be derived from the advancement of science; for every study of that nature tends, when pushed to a certain extent, to harden the heart, and render the philosopher reckless of everything save the objects of his own pursuit; all equilibrium in the character is destroyed." It would be impossible to find a sterner condemnation of the German system. The Germans sacrifice everything so ruthlessly to what they call science, that they treat poetry itself as though it were a form of botany, shall we say, or geology. Even when they touch the humanities they debauch them, and so utterly has

the equilibrium of their character been destroyed that we need feel no surprise at the atrocities committed by their well-trained army.

Lord Haldane, however, deplores "the appalling fact that in this country 90 per cent of our young persons had no further education after the age of fourteen." The fact does not appal us. There is a worse thing than the child deprived of the education which it seeks, and that is the child who has had forced upon it an education which it does not want. An overwhelming majority of children has received all the scholastic training which it needs by the time it has reached the age of fourteen. To drive it further through the mill of training is to make it unfit for a life of labour in the fields or in the workshops, and to substitute for an army of capable and industrious workers a mob of inefficient clerks. Let us take warning by Sweden, the best educated country in Europe, which boasts so many graduates of its universities, that the great wealth of its northern provinces goes ungathered, and thousands of its sons desert their motherland for the United States of America. Nor need we wonder with Lord Haldane "how many Kelvins and Darwins have been lost through the vast amount of untrained talent among the working classes which was not made available." No Kelvin and no Darwin were ever wasted. They are born, not made. A career has always

been open to talent in this country. The educational ladder has been climbed too often rather than not often enough. And to suspect talent where no talent is merely makes a victim of one who might, had he been left alone, lived an industrious and useful life.

If the opinions of Lord Haldane are open to suspicion, so also are his "facts." He tells us that "science and the application of science are becoming a necessity for the training of a large number of our people, and they are discouraged because nearly all the scholarships in our universities are allocated to the professions." If Lord Haldane will consult the university calendars for the years preceding the great war, he will find the undergraduates examined in the natural sciences far exceeded in number those examined in mathematics or classics. They wanted neither opportunity nor encouragement. Again, most of the money which the university and the colleges can save is devoted not to literature but to science, and the reproach that chemistry and biology, theoretical or applied, are starved for the better encouragement of the making of Greek verses, is a mere figment of the pedant's brain. "It is no use," Lord Haldane tells us, "saying to our manufacturers, 'Employ more chemists.' We are not training them." Indeed we are training them, and it is the politicians who for their own purposes cling impotently to the worn-out

rags of Cobdenism that impede at once our chemists and our manufacturers.

In truth, our progress is not hindered by the lack of education, nor by the want of scientific men ready to apply their knowledge and their skill to our manufactures. It is the system of free trade, which lies like a blight upon the industry of England. Not long since there appeared in 'The Morning Post,' endorsed by Dr Shipley, who is far better able to speak of science than Lord Haldane, a letter which anticipated and demolished the Viscount's argument: "As regards trained chemists," said Dr Shipley's eminent authority, "it can be confidently stated that we have an ample supply of men and women who have had a thoroughly sound chemical education, have taken high university degrees, and in many cases have already published original papers. They are thoroughly competent to undertake advanced technical work or research in any direction." One obstacle stands in their way: they have no chance of employment at a reasonable wage.

What now has Lord Haldane to say of unknown Kelvins and Darwins? Will he still declare, in contradiction of Dr Shipley, that we refuse to train chemists enough for the work there is to do? And will he persist, in the face of incontrovertible evidence, that we are beaten only by the better knowledge of our German competitors? Let him hear and ponder well

the reason given for our failure. "I can state from personal knowledge," says Dr Shipley's authority, "that a considerable number of manufacturers are now ready and willing to initiate new industries for the production of essential chemical products, but they hesitate to take the necessary steps in laying down plant, &c., until they have some assurance that their new industries will not be at the mercy of uncontrolled dumping and unscrupulous underselling as soon as the war is over. The issue seems to be quite clear and simple: you must either give the manufacturers reasonable safeguards, at any rate in the earlier stages of development, or you must forego the new industries." Indeed the issue is simple.

We have all the chemists that we want. Our universities are doing their duty both in science and in the humanities, and we need not attempt to cut them down to a bed of Procrustes. Rather they are at fault who refuse obstinately to permit our industries to be organised or protected. In other words, the future of applied science and industry lies in the hands of the politicians, and the sooner they rid us of Lord Haldane's "clear thinking" and platitudinous distortions of the facts, and give us that measure of protection which the Germans have never lacked, the sooner shall we prove our superiority to our rivals, and demonstrate our skill and learning before the eyes of the whole world.

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A SIDE SHOW ON THE TIGRIS.

I.

THERE is a big move on. We are all sure of that, because the battalion is back in billets, as we should say in France, though the comfortable French farmhouses which we occasionally occupied there are nothing but pleasant memories here. Perhaps we ought to say back in camp then—for here it is all tents, forty-pounders, eighty-pounders, and one-hundred-and-sixty-pounders, as the Indian army classes them. However, here we are. One Thursday morning a very thorough kit inspection is ordered, and later on orders come that the battalion will move—every man carrying a blanket, and no officer to have more than twenty pounds of kit. In the mess tent—an eighty-pounder with a very queer table and two wonderful forms—we speculate as to the direction in which the advance

is to take place this time. Almost unanimously we conclude that it must be on the other side—that is, on the right bank of the river. “They will never try to go over the parapet up here,” says B., “here” being the elaborately entrenched position just in front of us, from our share of which we have just been relieved. “And the —th Brigade were out on the right last week, you know, and they say that it’s no use trying to get round the marshes over there,” puts in S. At any rate, the men are to take nothing but what they can carry, and the officers only enough for one little mule-cart, so we are certain that it is a long march which is before us. A long march, a flanking movement—did we ever get such things in France? Is this a country of better chances? Everything is packed up in readiness, and

we are just waiting. Now this is one of the most terrible countries in the world in which to wait. Just here the river is a little to our south-west, not more than a quarter of a mile. All around is absolutely level plain, except far in the north-eastern distance, where the snow-capped Persian mountains loom up. No sign of life brightens them, and yet, somewhere up there, is the once thriving town of Bagh-i-Shahi and the domain of the Wâli of Pusht-i-Kuh. In the immediate neighbourhood of the camps the ground is almost bare, for many men and mules have trampled over it these last six weeks. So, all round, there is nothing but bare earth, bare earth, until one is sick of it. And near the camps also are the camp fires, both of British and of Indian troops. "I've smelt the Injun fires," cries a writer in 'Punch,' with bitter recollections, but what would he have thought of Mesopotamian fires? Here is a country without a particle of timber. There is not a tree within twenty miles of us, and the only fuel is a bushy scrub, a sort of fleshy-leaved tamarisk, which gives out the most unholy odour that you can possibly imagine. And when your brushwood is eked out with Arab fuel—mule dung dried in the sun!—then indeed you have a Devil's Incense.

H. says that the upper Tigris is one vast stink. What if you remember also that the camps are on the site of a battle of six weeks ago, and that the spot is also the site

of previous Turkish camps. Need we analyse soil or smells any further?

The citadel of the camps, as it were, is the group of mahalas moored against either bank of the river, and loaded with the supplementary stores of the various regiments. Just here, too, the bridge of boats spans the stream. We receive orders that we shall leave the camp in time to cross that bridge at a certain hour that evening, but after the tents have all been struck the order is countermanded. The move is postponed twenty-four hours. Another long wait is our fate. And all our extra kit is packed up, so one blanket and waterproof sheet must suffice for us. One of the most irritating things here is the fact that in March the sun will probably blaze furiously at you all day, while at the same time there is a bitterly cold wind. To move at all briskly makes you boil in perspiration, to sit or stand about chills you through and through. At night, of course, the wind is in sole charge of affairs. So most of us spend a very chilly time while waiting, and become more and more depressed when rain heralds the dawn. Now if there is one thing which exasperates us here even more than the cold wind, it is rain. Even when we are back in the camp, with tents over us, we haven't a good word for it. You cannot escape from it in a tent whose ridge-pole is below your shoulder!

The soil of the whole of this plain is absolutely uniform. No

one has ever seen a pebble in the country. The consequence is that rain makes the top two inches like oily gruel, and then refuses to penetrate the clay any farther. To walk twenty yards across such a slippery surface is far worse than walking on ice with skates on for the first time. (The battle of January 21 was actually fought under these conditions, our troops advancing over this very ground against the Turkish trenches.) And when you slip down, as you do, what a mess! This, then, is what we look out on, and wonder as to our orders. Not for long, however, for another twenty-four hours' postponement is essential. Nothing for it, then, but to lie down in one's tent and keep as dry as one can. The rain was not very continuous, but threatening conditions keep us waiting another forty-eight hours. At last, however, we get our orders. The first move in the new "show" is taken. We have our first orders, meagre enough, and proceed to carry them out. It is only a question of a night march across the bridge of boats and away into the desert. Only a night march of about seven miles, yet it

takes about seven hours. On arrival, about 2 A.M., the battalion forms up in mass, the men slip off their equipment, roll themselves up in their blankets, and lie down to get what rest they can.

The next day is fortunately bright. The mud has all dried and conditions are as favourable as possible. But we are far away from the river now and entirely dependent on the pukhals for our water supply. The very strictest economy then is the order for the rest of this move. But a waterless desert and a hot sun make fiercer attacks on every one's good resolutions. This day though is to be spent in resting, as far as possible. Officers and men are acquainted with the work to be done in the next two days, as far as the higher powers consider necessary. How promising it sounds as we sit round the C.O. with our maps and note-books, and how high in hope some of us are.

N., who has been out botanising before breakfast, and who tells us that this region has a "Steppe Flora," has found a four-leaved clover, so he is sure we are coming through with hundreds of Turk scalps.

II.

Every water-bottle is full, and every man has three days' rations. That, at least, is certain when we start off that evening for the great march, which, followed by an immediate attack, is going to

turn the enemy's position and give us the road to Kut. A night march on this open plain should be an easy matter compared with what it would be in closed country, for we are able to advance in such

wide columns that the distance between front and rear is kept within reasonable bounds. There are many men with us who are going into action for the first time, and the rules for the conduct of night marches have been repeated over and over to them to make them understand the seriousness of the situation. How cold-blooded some of the orders sound! But as magazines are charged and cut-offs closed it is not really such a risky life as one might have supposed.

We start as the sun goes down. It is a beautiful clear night with bright stars and a very young moon, and we march off steadily and surely enough towards the first rendezvous where the columns are to be finally organised. On the uniform dry earth of the desert the wheeled transport makes very little noise, but how far can it be heard?

Every one knows the maddening nature of any night march now. You find the people in front are moving forward. You move forward. Suddenly you realise, perhaps by collision, that the man in front has stopped (because the man in front of him has stopped, and so on), so you stop. Then you find yourself moving on again. Then you are again stopped. With such large bodies of men it must be so, perhaps; but as the miles go by and your march becomes more mechanical, your halts become more and more abrupt and more and more irritating. How one curses internally.

But every hour there is a longer rest, and as soon as every man has realised that it is a rest period down he flops and lies there, asleep if possible, until a comrade's nudge gets him up and ready to move off once more. Mysterious figures on horseback pass and repass the column occasionally. Are they wild Arabs—or Staff Officers? On our right is some mule transport—and not even the rigid rules of silence can prevent the drivers muttering “Bâs, bâs,” to their refractory charges, together with a muttered torrent of invective which orthodox opinion believes to be the only tongue a mule can understand. You must always be reminding a mule of his illegitimate origins, it seems!

Down, down, down, drop one's spirits as one trudges on, and no rise seems to be experienced until dawn shows. But as the light appears the tiredness goes. Two hours before dawn one is certain that no men can possibly fight after a seventeen-mile march like this, but when we can see again, then we are as full of fight as ever. When shall we be there? Shall we surprise them? Now we really are going to see some fighting. The anticipation of youth and the studied equanimity of long experience are both here, and both present the same fearless front to whatever may happen. As soon as it is light enough to see any distance we find that we can see our objective. The troops in front of us are

moving on to their positions, and we are halted to give them time to get away. Over there on the right is a long low sinister mound. It is the redoubt which forms the end of the enemy position. It suggests fugitive passages from "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came." What does it mean for us? At present we are in a depression, an old water-course—one of the dis-used canals which a neglectful Government has allowed to

dry up, to the ruin of the surrounding country. We can scarcely be seen, but what can we see? We see enemy cavalry moving about, and we actually see that they have a camp outside the redoubt. The uninformed of us wonder why a determined onslaught is not being made on the camp, but we see nothing of the sort happening. Our artillery are getting into position and opening fire. Our night march is ended. Our day is begun.

III.

We supposed that we should attack the enemy's position just as dawn was breaking, but it is ten o'clock before our own battalion moves out of the nullah to take its part in the actual battle. We have been waiting, listening to the artillery, looking up at one solitary aeroplane, generally wondering what could be happening. A considerable distance still separates us from the enemy, and we remain in artillery formation while receiving rifle bullets which are nearly spent. On a much wider scale the scene resembles now that old print of the battle of Tel-el-Kebir which used to be common in some inn parlours. There is the wide plain, almost entirely desert, dotted about at this distance with little squads of men moving steadily towards the distant redoubt. Nearer the Turks, of course, they are already extended. Little spurts of dust are jumping up all

round, and in the rear platoons one or two men begin to "stop them." One is hit just above the top of his boot and curses volubly, but the sergeant comforts him with, "Ought to be jolly glad you got such a beauty. Couldn't have had a nicer wound," and then calmly removes a bullet from under his own shirt, just under his right breast-pocket, through which it had passed and stopped before breaking the skin. "Just my luck, you see, not a damned scratch." This sergeant is one of those who bear charmed lives, two decorations for splendid work already, a perfect terror in an assault, and "Can't manage to get a blighty one, anyhow," as he says. And in Mesopotamia no chance, for India is the farthest which we can hope to reach. It is now very hot, the sun beating down on the advancing troops. Looking eastward one sees all sorts of queer figures moving about,

freaks of the mirage. As we move forward and open out into further extensions, the stretcher-bearers begin to get very busy, and our own C.O. and other officers are removed among the wounded. Just here it is almost the orthodox battle of the text-books, except that we are using artillery and the enemy are not. They know perfectly well that on this level plain, with no cover for the attacking troops, the rifle will do all that its most enthusiastic devotees have ever claimed for it, and that machine-gun fire will be more effective than shrapnel. Before we can get to them every man of our force has got to expose himself for several hundred yards. Those of us who are in support receive orders to stop and lie down, but as we are lying down absolutely in the open and plenty of stray bullets are flying about, every now and then one finds a resting-place in one of us. Now we know nothing of what is going on throughout the rest of the field. We do not know what success other divisions, brigades, regiments, or even our own firing-line, are meeting with. We only know that we must await further orders. The stretcher-bearers remove our wounded, and pass through us carrying wounded from the ground in front, but hours pass before we get any orders to move. The Turk fire slackens as the sun goes down. Some of us keep asking one another what can be happening, but the majority of the men are con-

tent to lie and rest. We move them a short distance forward into slight cover when those who have been occupying it advance, and go on waiting. At last our order comes to move. We shall find the rest of the battalion dug in at a certain spot. It does not take us long to find it, and we proceed to dig in also. We ought to have received these orders earlier, as an officer had been sent to us with a message. Poor W., no one has seen or heard of him since. "Missing"—what may that mean?

We now grasp the situation—which is this. The whole of our division is dug in at a short distance from the enemy. "We had just got the order that the whole line will assault at five o'clock," grumbles M., "when we got another order that the whole line would dig in where it is. Why wouldn't they let us go on and finish the job?" But we suppose that we shall find out the answer to that question later on. The men, as soon as they have dug into cover, are allowed to eat and drink, for they have had practically nothing in the last twenty-four hours. A long march and a stern fight—and here they are. It is late at night now, and a very sharp watch must be kept, but those not actually watching may rest. But not for long. We had just been speculating as to whether we should carry out the assault at dawn, when orders come that the whole force will retire at once, as quickly as

possible, to the depression from which the force had debouched for its original attack early that morning. So the attempt has been a failure. We are not going to be allowed to take the redoubt after all. We have not time to wonder why, however, or to make guesses as to past and future plans. Our business is to get our own battalion back intact. For some time nothing but desultory firing has been heard from the Turks, but we have just got nicely under way in a compact column because of the darkness, when all of a sudden the most terrific outbreak of rapid fire one could possibly imagine bursts out behind us. For a moment one imagines the whole column is being annihilated, and then realises that no one is being hit at all—all the bullets are going high. So we press rapidly on, and the officer who had been ordered to bring up the rear of the battalion has the satisfaction of knowing that no men are dropping out as casualties, although the machine-gunners and ammunition carriers have to work like slaves to get their heavy loads along quickly enough. As it is now about midnight, and there are no lights or signals to guide us, to find our way is more or less a matter of instinct—until some one trips over one of the artillery telephone wires lying almost parallel to our direction, and leading, as we all know, to the neighbourhood of Divisional Headquarters. So, with one or two very slight mishaps only, the various units reach

the old depression again, and wish strenuously for the dawn. One or two matters about the front line are now talked of. A regiment a little farther to our right has been badly cut up. Their line of approach, unfortunately for them, took them into a wide nullah running in the same direction, and the Turk machine-guns swept the nullah with terrible completeness. "Their cries were horrible," says M. One of the youngsters near me said, "They're cheering, sir," but I knew what it was. It wasn't cheering. The rifle fire was wonderfully well aimed all along the line, and it is a matter for surprise that our casualties were not much heavier. Woe betide any one who was a casualty though, for although he got to the dressing-station all right, yet it was about twenty miles across the desert to the first casualty clearing station; there were only a few old-fashioned mule ambulances, and hundreds of cases were carried on almost springless carts, probably mixed up with ammunition, pukhals, and bags. S. was actually carried on a stretcher by orderlies for the whole distance. And there was very little water for them either. Nobody worked harder than the doctors, and on that open country they were as much exposed as any one else. Our own M.O. was killed by a rifle bullet at least two thousand yards from the enemy.

But most of the wounded have been removed before the

next morning, which dawns at last, and which only dawns to reveal fresh dangers. We soon realise that the force is to retire, but how far we do not know. The movement begins, and already the forms of mounted Arabs and Turk cavalry are to be distinguished hovering round our rear and flanks. Our brigade is told off to occupy a partially entrenched position which covers the line of retreat, and we remain there some hours, strengthening it as much as possible, and again having a chance for a little food and water. But we have to make our water-bottles last all the rest of that day, so it must be a very little which we have now. We realise that Turkish

shrapnel is now harassing our rear, and our own artillery has to get into action. As the sun increases in power it appears as if there is a huge lake all round our west and south, across which gigantic horsemen, some lifted right up in the air, are moving. It is impossible to range in such a mass of deceiving appearances, and to look at them makes the head swim and the eyes blur. As a mild sensation a perfectly naked man is suddenly seen limping towards our parapet. He has been caught by the Arabs and stripped of everything but life.

Soon after we also get orders to take our place in the retiring column.

IV.

Although we do not form part of the rearguard, yet we are very near the rear of the main body, and we begin our retirement in extended order, which gradually closes down into columns of platoons in fours. There is a state of mind which is perhaps unavoidably associated with a task unaccomplished. We all felt it, I think. The uselessness of our efforts of the previous day hurt us. It was hard to be coming back instead of going forward, as we had hoped to do. The sand seemed so much more dusty, and the sun seemed hotter, and packs and rifles so much heavier than they had done before. As we are plodding along, our

artillery who have gone on before us are firing over our heads at any of the enemy who are still hanging closely to the last members of our column. They do not dare to come very near, fortunately, but being in the rearguard must be very trying work. It is hard to fight against men who seem, in the delusive atmosphere, to be floating on air, or half immersed in some diaphanous curtain, or swimming in a misty blue lake, and who often do not appear like men at all. You cannot see if they are friend or foe, and you can form very little idea of their numbers. All you know is that you must not let them come too close.

The sun's rays get more and more vertical, and every one wishes for just a little shade, but there is no stopping now, not even for the slightest rest. Every one must push on and on steadily. No one must drop out, for that would mean capture at the very least. There is no conversation, unless the abuse which is bestowed upon transport drivers, who somehow seem to be determined to cross our path diagonally, can be called by that name. No one is in the mood for joking. It is too hot, and we are too tired. At first we had thought that we were only going to retire a short distance, but we find ourselves going on and on until we almost cease to think about what we might have done. Now begins a terrible time for those who have rashly drank their water supply. A violent thirst attacks us, and even the most resolute of us find it necessary to take occasional sips. Now the lack of proper food during the last thirty hours begins to tell. Unfortunately, with our system of emergency feeding, it is very difficult to be strict with the water when one has only salt bully beef and very dry biscuits as the solid part of one's rations. They do set up such a thirst. And we are at the rear of a huge marching column which leaves us enveloped all the time in fine dust. But we press on.

One looks at one's watch. After what seems to be a terrible age one looks at it again. What! only twenty minutes gone by. The dis-

tance seems much greater than it did even on the night of the advance. Shoulder-straps are beginning to gall, and some of the men's feet will scarcely go along. Presently there is a thud. A man has fallen—we just look to see if there is any chance of getting him along; he will get some help on a limber when the rearguard closes up. (Fortunately most of these who dropped out through exhaustion did manage to get back to some of our own people in safety.) One by one our numbers are depleted, despite everything which we can do to encourage all to keep going.

Now we pass some very brackish dirty pools, and eyes that would not have noticed them at home almost start out of their heads in hope, while parched mouths whose owners previously had seldom looked on water as a beverage open with longing. Only strict discipline prevents one from breaking ranks and rules under these conditions; but to drink that stuff would most likely be more injurious than a few hours' more drought. At last the mountains come in sight once more, and after many weary hours we reach the spot at which we had bivouacked the night before we set out on this expedition proper. Shall we stay here now? We hope so—but no, it is not to be, we must go on until we are on the other side of the river again.

Now begins to most of us the worst part of the march, for we have been marching

and fighting continuously now for forty - eight hours, and strength is going fast. Fortunately we are now safe from attack, as there is a force at the point we have just passed, so we have a halt of a quarter of an hour every hour. Now there are men hobbling along carrying their boots, with their feet rolled up in puttees. We go very slowly, to give every one a chance. However, we know that the danger is not great now. The sun has gone down and no longer worries us by his glare, and there is a fairly bright moon. Lights appear ahead. They are by the river bank towards which we are slowly moving, but no Will - o' - the - wisp ever seemed so difficult of access. Lights in the desert appear about a quarter of a mile away from you, whether you are that distance from them or ten miles. But when you begin to go towards that light, then you find out the deception. And so it is with us. A little march, a little rest—a little march, a little rest,—and so on. Or perhaps we ought to call it a crawl rather than a march, for the aching legs have a kind of independent motion of their own, and our dazed heads cannot control them. Suddenly we see dim shapes looming up, and the noise of confused cries becomes greater. We are right up against a camp, and the

lights really are near now. Soon we reach the river, and there at last the bottles are allowed to be filled. What matter that the river is full of mud, that rubbish and dead bodies may have been in it, that dirty boats and dirty Arabs have been in it just here! It is water, and that is enough.

River steamers loading up with wounded line the shore. On the banks are crowds of battalions, detachments, British, Indians, all sorts of transport. We steadily make our way—by very slow degrees, though—through the troops, through the tangle of mules and ponies with their drivers and carts, which are crowding towards the bridge of boats. At last we reach the safe side once more, and get back to the old camping-ground. Never had that camp seemed a desirable place before, but now we are content. Here are tents. Here, at least, is some shelter. Here we can get cleaner water. Here, at last, we can cease the interminable moving, moving, moving, which has been our lot for so many of the past hours. Fifty miles in fifty hours, waterless desert, blazing sun, and a stiff fight thrown in.

But now night has fallen, and for us there is a drink of hot tea, and then the merciful sleep of exhaustion.

ORTONIAN.

THE ADVENTURES OF MATTHEW QUIRK:

A TRUE NARRATIVE OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.

Transcribed from the original Manuscript by A. W. Malcolmson.

THE original manuscript, from which the following narrative is transcribed, was written by Matthew Quirk, a Lieutenant in the 26th Cameronian Regiment of Foot, who fought under Sir John Moore in the Peninsular War. He was taken prisoner at Cerunna in 1808, and was imprisoned in the Citadel of Verdun, the place which figures so conspicuously in the present war. The narrative relates how he, with other fellow-prisoners, escaped from Verdun, and describes the thrilling adventures they met with; how they were recaptured and immured in the dungeons of Bitche, and escaped from there twice, the second time successfully. It is a story of marvellous human endurance and determination, showing what men in desperate plight would do and suffer in those days for the sake of gaining their freedom.

Our hero's father, also named Matthew, was a Scotsman, and originally spelled his name Kirk. He was a notable smuggler, evidently a profession of some worth in those days. He ran away with, and married, the daughter of Sir Murray Maxwell of Newrith, near Stranraer. Finally, he settled down in Peel, Isle of Man, and in 1800 changed his name to Quirk, which is Manx.

He is buried in Peel churchyard.

Unfortunately the first page of the original manuscript is missing; but it is evident that the prisoners were confined in the Citadel of Verdun when the narrative opens, and had planned their escape, and were awaiting darkness to enable them to commence operations. They had agreed to meet at the door of the church in the fortress, enter it, and get out through the church window into the garden, and so make their way to the outer ramparts.

Nothing further could now be done until aided by the friendly cloak of night. The gendarmes were to make their first visit at eleven o'clock, and we agreed that we should immediately afterwards quit our beds and meet at the church door. At nine we went to bed, and never in my life did I pass two such anxious hours as those until the guard paid their visit.

At length the long-looked-for dark lantern made its appearance. I feigned sleep; then, quietly taking my clothes under my arm, with quaking heart made my way to the appointed spot, where I found my companions assembled. We removed the piece from the

door, and, as the opening was very small, with much difficulty squeezed ourselves through. In the church all was darkness. We huddled on our clothes; then began to grope our way to the window on which all our hopes depended. In doing so, one of my companions stumbled against some planks in a pile, and down they came with a fine crash. We heard the sentinels hailing each other on the outside, and we concluded all was over with us, knowing that if we were taken in the act we could expect no mercy from our guards. We remained still for about a quarter of an hour, in the momentary expectation of seeing our guards enter sword in hand, when we again ventured to proceed, everything being hushed with the exception of a large watchdog that continued to bark the whole time of our escape. At length we reached the window, which, to our consternation, we found so high that Ellison, on my shoulders, and pushed as high as I could raise him with my hands, could not reach within several feet of the bottom of it. We had no alternative but to pile up lumber under the window, at the risk of making a terrible noise, and in the space of half an hour we got to the windows. Passing one of our ropes to the cross-bars, we let ourselves gently down into the garden; we listened, and could plainly hear the feet of one of the sentries as he walked towards us, but lost the sound in the distance as he walked the opposite way. We took that

opportunity, and, creeping on hands and knees, safely reached the garden wall. Here an unforeseen difficulty presented itself, the top of the wall being covered with tiles which projected about two feet on each side, over which it was impossible to pass without making so much noise as must alarm the sentry, to whom we were now quite close. Ellison got on my shoulders, and handed down the tiles one by one; we were obliged to feel among the grass before we laid them down, as even their ringing against a stone might discover us. Fortunately, the night was extremely dark, and noise was all we had to guard against.

A quarter of an hour finished this work, and at length, behold us clear of the garden. With hearty steps we proceeded towards the ramparts, in the direction we thought the best to avoid the sentries, when, on passing the corner of a magazine, we found ourselves close to one, who instantly challenged us. We made no reply, but scampered off as hard as we could. The open door of a garden presented itself, which we dashed into and ran across. At the bottom of the garden was a wall about three feet high, which I, who was headmost, leaped without a moment's consideration as to what height it might be outside, and down I went about twenty-five feet. I really thought I had jumped the ramparts. My companions were all on top of me before I could apprise them, Ellison with his shoes full of nails right in my

face, which fractured my nose and completely scarified my countenance. Fortunately no other damage was sustained, and we reached the ramparts, on the top of which we passed close to a sentinel, who must have put an end to our career had he not been fast asleep.

Not a moment was now to be lost. We took our rope from round our bodies, knotted it together, and making it fast to a large stone, over I went. The rope was so small that I could not hold it, and after its slipping about twenty feet through my fingers with such velocity that I could no longer retain my hold, I fell about sixteen feet, and sprained my ankle severely. (I have never yet fully recovered from the sprain, and am afraid never shall.) I called to my comrades to haul the rope up and make as many knots on it as possible. They did so, but nevertheless, they all fell a great height, but without any injury, except to one, who was severely bruised about the loins.

I, with much difficulty, was able to reach the place where we had concealed our provisions. We had just gained it, when, exhausted by fatigue and pain, Ellison and I fainted. Our worthy Dr Barklimore soon restored us, and luckily having his lancets about him, bled us.

About an hour after reaching our place of ambush, we heard the alarm guns fired from the Citadel, and for the whole of the day we heard voices near us and in different parts of the

wood, which we were all well aware must be those of our pursuers. During the whole of the day I suffered extremely from my ankle, and at night found that it was impossible for me to commence marching, nor indeed did I expect to be able to do so for many days.

I was unwilling that my misfortune should prevent my friends from proceeding, and wished them to leave me to my fate, but they most nobly insisted that to the last they should remain by me, and it was unanimously agreed that we should either all get off or all be taken.

The next day we passed nearly in the same way, much alarmed by people and dogs passing close to us. Towards evening I found my ankle so well that I determined on making an attempt to proceed, and accordingly, a little after dark we left our lurking place, but when we had proceeded a mile, I found it perfectly impossible to continue, and we were again obliged to retreat into the wood. By this time our stock of water was finished, and Barklimore and Ellison left us to go and replenish our store. They remained away so long that Anderson and I thought they were taken. At length, to our great joy, they made their appearance, and accounted for their long stay by telling us that they had met with a fine rivulet in which they had indulged in a bathe. On the third and fourth days it rained excessively and without the slightest intermission, during which time we lay nearly

covered with water. It had, however, one good effect, as it entirely reduced the swelling of my leg, and on the fifth day I felt so much better that I determined I should no longer detain my friends.

About seven o'clock in the evening we left the wood and proceeded to the brook where my companions had replenished our store of water. Here we refreshed ourselves with a bathe, and set forward in high spirits, bending our course towards the frontier of Switzerland. About ten we reached the banks of the Meuse, along which we continued until we arrived at the village of Dien, where there was a bridge over which we had determined to pass. To do so we were obliged to pass through the village. On entering it all was silent, not a being to be seen. We had gained the end of the bridge when we were surprised by the discharge of a musket behind us, and the bell of the village church immediately began to toll. We instantly knew it to be the alarm, and with the greatest consternation ran as fast as we could in hopes of gaining some wood. We soon came to another bridge, over which we were proceeding when we were stopped by two muskets being discharged before us, and the bells of another village began to toll, and at the same time we found we were on an island formed by the river. We now gave ourselves up as lost, as neither Barkli-more nor Ellisen could swim,

and the river here was very broad and deep, and at the same moment we could distinguish the voices of our pursuers. We discovered a small fishing-boat, into which we all leaped, and were across the river in a moment. We did not stop to congratulate each other on our miraculous escape, but ran with all speed across ploughed fields and everything that came in our way. So strong was the apprehension of again falling into the hands of our pursuers that I did not even think of my sprain. At length, after clambering up a very steep hill, we reached a wood, when all of us were quite exhausted. We considered it most prudent to conceal ourselves, as it was nearly day, and we might not meet with another wood for some time. When day broke, we found the wood so extremely thin that we ran the utmost hazard of being discovered, even if any person passed within two hundred yards of where we were. We traversed it from side to side, but could not find a bit of underwood. We lay down at the root of a tree, and one kept watch whilst the others slept — which not even the anxiety we were in could prevent us from doing. This was the most anxious day we passed, and it was likewise the quietest, as not a human being came near us. At about seven o'clock at night we quitted the wood and struck right across the country, which in this part was nothing but

fields of wheat nearly at its full height; nothing could be more fatiguing than wading through it, particularly where it was laid down by the rain. I suffered very much from my ankle, but pushed on and said nothing. Nothing occurred during the night beyond the labour of fording rivers, clambering over hills and fences, and avoiding every village and human dwelling. At length the day appeared, and we got into a fine thicket of brushwood close to the town of St Michael, where we lay quite secure during the day, but not without being considerably disturbed. It was a Sunday, and a very fine day, and all the lads and lasses had resorted to the woods to gather nuts and enjoy themselves. The pleasure we received from their joyful songs and sprightly dances was by no means a recompense for the alarm they gave us by sometimes coming much nearer to us than we wished. As the sun drew near the west, the sounds of mirth and our apprehensions ceased. About an hour after dark we again set forward, and passed close round the town of St Michael. Here the country began to be so mountainous that we found it absolutely impossible to proceed without getting on the highroad, which we soon found to be excessively dangerous, as we were constantly meeting passengers on foot and horseback. The instant the country began to be a little more level we again took to the fields. About one we came

to a most beautiful cottage with a most tempting orchard about it. We were making bold with a little of the fruit, when a large watch-dog spoiled our repast, and we were obliged to scamper off. The remaining part of this night's march was through meadow ground. By daybreak we reached the confines of an immense wood (named on the chart Bois de la Marne). It was situated in low swampy ground, and the underwood was so thick as to be nearly impenetrable. The wetness of the ground, closeness of the air, and exhalations of the swamp caused by an excessively hot sun made us pass a most unpleasant day in this noxious retreat. We were so feverish and thirsty that we could neither sleep nor eat. At length, to our great satisfaction, night relieved us, and we once more enjoyed the pure air.

Soon after setting forward we got into a field of wheat cut down and in stooks, in passing which we heard a number of voices close to us. We concealed ourselves in one of the stooks. The voices approached us, and when too late to retreat we found there was a cart carrying off the grain. It is impossible to describe our consternation for a few minutes, in momentary expectation of the harvesters putting their forks into us, and armed as they were with such formidable weapons we had no chance of being able to make resistance. Luckily for us the very next stook accomplished the loading of

their cart, and we were quit of our fears.

We now pushed forward with fresh spirits, and about ten o'clock came to the foot of a large mountain, which with one of lesser size formed a pass through which it would be necessary for us to go. We had scarce entered it when we found ourselves close upon a village, which appeared all alive, as we supposed, in gathering in the harvest. We halted, and were considering what were the best steps to take, when we were roused by hearing voices in our rear, and soon discovered the cart and its attendant which had already occasioned us so much alarm. We were now obliged to quit the road and conceal ourselves in a vineyard on the brow of one of the mountains. As soon as they had passed, we scrambled up to the top of the mountain to try to round the village. This we accomplished after an hour's extreme labour, scrambling over hedges and over stone pits. We at length got upon a level road which led along the skirts of the extensive wood which had given us shelter during the day. We were again disturbed by a man dashing out of the wood a little way behind us and joining the path on which we were. We quickened our pace, which however did not prevent his gaining on us very fast. We had no apprehensions from one man, but were afraid others might be in the wood close to us. He seemed determined to overtake us, and at length did so, and entered

into conversation. We discovered him to be a peasant who lived at a little distance. He soon convinced us that he was fully aware of our being deserters of some description, and very kindly offered to take us into his house, which he told us was at a short distance, and where he promised to procure a good bottle of wine and some other refreshments. This temptation we deemed imprudent, and would not comply with it. He insisted on accompanying us several miles and putting us on the fair road to Toul, to which place we said we were going. We at length got rid of him, and, about an hour after, struck off the road into the fields. A little before day we came to a field of turnips, which offered us a most sumptuous repast. At daylight we got into a thick wood, close to a delightful spring, where we passed a very refreshing quiet day. At the usual hour we set forward on our journey. We now commenced to enter a country entirely covered with vineyards, passing through which we found extremely hazardous, as people were placed in many of them to watch the grapes, which were now getting ripe. We concluded there would be infinitely less risk on the highway, and by following it we should make greater progress with less fatigue. We therefore determined on following the road in future, with the intention of rounding all the towns and villages. About ten o'clock we reached the highroad between

Paris and Berne, in Switzerland. About half-past eleven we were enabled to put our intentions into execution at a small bush-house situated by itself. The fineness of the night had kept its inhabitants out of bed at this late hour, and we found the whole family assembled at the door, consisting of two old women, one young one, a boy, and several children. Our wants were soon made known, and in a few minutes we had all the provender the house afforded (*viz.*, a cold fillet of veal and a piece of bacon) spread before us. This we discussed with an expedition which astonished the natives, and having swallowed a few bottles of sour wine, pocketed the remains of the loaf of black bread, and paid the reckoning, we buckled on our knapsacks and marched off.

During our repast we had gathered sufficient from the conversation of the women to convince us we had chosen a very improper place for a halt, for it appeared that we were actually in the house of a gendarme who at that moment was absent at the town of Toul, where he had conducted a couple of deserters whom he had arrested that morning, and for whose return the family were waiting in expectation.

In a short time we reached the suburbs of Toul, when we quitted the highway to avoid passing through them. This we found a very difficult business, from the number of gendarmes and enclosures in

the neighbourhood, and we should at last have been obliged to pass through several streets had we not, fortunately, on passing through a garden, found a lady and her lover enjoying the cool night breeze, to whom we related our perplexity. The young man, at the request of the lady, conducted us by a cross-way to the road to Switzerland, when he took his leave of us.

The road now for some miles led along the beautiful banks of the Moselle, which tempted us to refresh ourselves with a bathe, and we pushed on the remainder of the night with great spirit and vigour, until day obliged us to take shelter in a neighbouring wood, after a march we calculated to be about thirty-six miles.

About noon we were alarmed by the barking of dogs and the sound of voices close to us. We covered ourselves with the fallen leaves of the trees, and for a quarter of an hour lay in great agitation. At one time we considered we were discovered, as a man with a gun in his hand passed close to us accompanied by a dog that kept smelling at the very bush that concealed us. At length, to our great joy, they left the wood, and we received no further interruption until night enabled us to continue our journey.

About ten we found ourselves close to the small town of Visalze, and as our store of provisions was much reduced and our brandy entirely out, we were tempted by the smallness of the place to enter it in

search of some refreshment. The very first house had the friendly bush suspended over the door, inviting us to enter. We found the landlord and an old man enjoying themselves over a bottle of wine, while the lady of the house and a very pretty girl, her daughter, were preparing some ham and eggs for supper. We joined the party, and soon an addition to the bacon furnished us with a most hearty supper. To the inquisitive inquiries of the family we simply replied that we were travelling merchants going to the fair at Charmes, which we knew was to take place next day, and that wishing to arrive there before morning it was our intention to march all night. We therefore, after discharging our bill, requested the landlord to conduct us through the town to the road leading to that place. He attended us without having any suspicion of us. Not a light was visible in the town, nor a soul in the streets, and we reached the highway and took leave of our conductor without the least interruption. The easy manner in which we had accomplished this removed all our remaining fears of passing through towns and villages, which during the remainder of this night's march we continued to do with equal secrecy and success. By morning we reached within two miles of the town of Charmes, when we took shelter in a hanging wood on the side of a very steep hill close to a small village. The rain fell in torrents during the day, and we

were completely drenched to the skin, and had great difficulty in retaining our places, as the wood was situated on the side of a very steep hill which the rain rendered extremely slippery. About three o'clock in the evening we were much alarmed by a sudden rustling among the trees close to us, and before we could divine the cause a countryman with a basket on his back stood before us. He no sooner discovered us, when, seized with the greatest terror at our extraordinary appearance, he darted from us in an instant, and, in the agony of his fright, missing his foot, he and his creel rolled over each other, to our no small amusement, to the foot of the hill, where, after lying for a moment stunned by his sudden descent, he got up and ran with all his speed towards the village. Our mirth was soon turned to extreme apprehension, as we were convinced he would alarm the village, when immediate search would be made for us. In a great hurry we gathered up our effects, and after crossing a small vineyard without being perceived, got into another small wood, where we lay until night enabled us to resume our route. We walked very slow that we might not reach the town of Charmes until late, so as to be able to pass it without the risk of being seen. By eleven we were close to it, when a consultation being held as to the propriety of passing through, we agreed to do so, being tempted by the apparent stillness of the town, and

prompted by the difficulty of going round it, one side being closely skirted by the river Moselle and the other by a steep hill so completely covered with gardens that it was very uncertain whether we should be able to pass them. We accordingly entered the town, marching at a considerable distance in rear of each other, to be as little conspicuous as possible. We soon discovered that there was quite a number of people stirring in the streets; but it was now too late to retrograde, and we pushed on, trusting that our good fortune would again befriend us. We had now nearly reached the extremity of the town when we discovered, amongst three or four men standing before a door, a gendarme, who, observing that we were travellers, from the knapsacks on our backs, saluted the foremost of the party with "Bon soir, monsieur." Though you may be assured that this salute was by no means agreeable, yet we returned it with equal coolness and civility, hoping that we might yet find the means of giving him the slip. He said he saw we were strangers, and volunteered to show us to a tavern where we might be accommodated for the night. We accepted this offer in hopes of getting into a private room, where, we were pretty sure, our conductor might be bribed to let us proceed without further molestation. The house he led us to was so full that a private room could not be procured, and we made this

a pretext for asking him to conduct us to another. He consented, but first demanded our passports, which we promised to produce on our being comfortably lodged for the night, and begged him to favour us with his company to supper. This satisfied him for the moment, and he agreed to conduct us to another house. The demand of passports had attracted several of the people who were present on its being made; and in order to satisfy themselves they joined us in the street and accompanied us to our new lodging, where we again found it impossible to get a private room. We now concluded that every attempt to save ourselves would be in vain, as we were surrounded by a number of people who already began to show strong symptoms of suspicion; and when the gendarme again demanded our passports, we were on the point of discovering our real situation when, to our great astonishment, our medical friend with perfect sangfroid produced his pocket-book and told the gendarme he should now be satisfied. We were quite at a loss to devise his meaning, when he put an end to our suspense by producing one of his certificates from the College at Glasgow, written in Latin, which he immediately put into the hand of the gendarme, telling him at the same time, with great composure, that he had all our passports in his possession, he having secured them in his pocket-book to

keep them from the rain which had fallen during the whole of the day. The idea under which our companion attempted this gross deception was the probability of the gendarme being unable to read, which his appearance certainly gave. Our friend's conclusion turned out perfectly correct, for, after turning and twisting the papers about for some time, he laid them down, evidently unable to decide as to their authenticity, and unwilling to expose his ignorance before so many. He, however, observed that he had never before seen any passports like these in question, on which we all assured him they were a new kind just issued in consequence of a late decree of the Emperor. With this assurance he seemed quite satisfied. Our "passports" were returned, and our countenances began to clear up with the hope of yet getting happily out of the scrape, when the door opened and in walked an officer of gendarmerie, attended by a file of musketeers, who soon dispelled all our hopes by addressing us individually by our respective names, at the same time saying he was very glad to see us, and that he had been expecting us three days before.

We now surrendered ourselves with a good grace, and asked permission of our arrester to stay supper before we were conducted to prison. He gratified our wish, and after placing four sentries round the room, very politely joined us at table, where, notwith-

standing our misfortune, we managed to discuss a very hearty meal, which we enlivened by a few bottles of burgundy. Our new guest regaled us with a view of his instructions from General Virion with regard to the mode of treating us provided we fell into his hands. These gave strict injunctions that we should be stripped of all our money, and everything about us which might be likely in future to facilitate any other attempt to escape. It was then directed that we should be handcuffed and loaded with irons, and in this manner conducted from prison to prison back to Verdun, at the same time ordering that any attempt to escape on the road should be punished by instant death. You may be sure that the perusal of these humane orders did not much tend to elevate our spirits, as they taught us what we had to expect from the rancour of this merciless tyrant now we had again fallen into his clutches. At midnight we were conducted by a strong guard to the prison, where the officer, instead of searching us as directed by his orders, very civilly desired us to deliver all our money, which we did to the amount of about one hundred pounds sterling. We were enabled by this lenity to retain a small sum, and kept concealed a saw for cutting iron bars, which we fully determined to make use of on the very first practicable occasion. We were now permitted to retire to our straw without the en-

cumbrances of irons, and being overcome with fatigue and anxiety of mind we slept soundly until awakened by the gaoler calling us to get up to commence our march. We were placed in a cart, handcuffed two and two and chained together, in which equipage we set forward attended by three gendarmes à cheval and two on foot. At noon we halted at a small bush-house, where we were allowed the honour of treating all our escort with dinner and as much wine as they chose to drink, they taking very good care to defray all expenses out of our stock.

In the evening we reached the town of Visalze, and passed before the door of the very cabaret we had supped in two nights before. The landlord and his fair daughter were at the door, and no sooner recognised us than their looks betrayed evident symptoms of surprise and sorrow, but they were afraid of speaking to us lest they might suffer for the relief they had given us. This gaol was so situated that it would be impossible to effect our escape from it in one night. We therefore quietly took up our quarters until daylight, when we again set forward.

About two in the afternoon we arrived at Colomby, where, we were told, we should remain for the night. This information was highly pleasing to us, as on a survey of the prison we found it excellently calculated for making our projected attempt. The room we were confined in was on the ground

floor, the window looking into the open street, and no other impediment but strong iron bars, which by the assistance of our saw we would be able to remove. We were so confident of succeeding, that to provide for our comfort in the woods we bought each a pair of worsted hose and a woollen nightcap from a hawker, who was allowed to dispose of them to us through the window. At dark in the evening we had the satisfaction to see that no sentinel was placed before the window, and about ten, when everything was hushed, we commenced our operations. The noise of the saw on the iron was scarcely louder than the scratching of a rat on the wainscot, until the impression began to be deep, when it became considerably more noisy; and at length, notwithstanding the greatest precaution, it reached the ears of our gaoler, who, suspecting something wrong, got up and made his appearance before the window, when of course the noise ceased. He continued there listening for a considerable time, when, hearing no repetition of what alarmed him, he returned to his bed; but his suspicions having now put him on the alert, the moment we began again he made his appearance, and being now convinced that all was not right, he brought a chair, and, placing it before the window, set himself down in it for the night. It is impossible to express our disappointment and concern at this obstacle, which we could

contrive no possible means of removing. Our hopes had been wound up to the highest pitch, as we had actually got two-thirds through the bar. We had, however, still some hopes that the coldness of the night would induce him to quit his seat before morning, but in this we were likewise deceived, for day appearing put an end to our suspense. Our anxiety was now directed towards the preservation of our saw, which we were aware we should lose if we could not find means to conceal what we had about us. The cut it had made in the iron was so small that on rubbing it over with candle grease and some rust no vestige of it remained. This operation was just finished when the gaoler and his wife entered, and with the aid of spectacles very minutely examined every bar in the window, without however making any discovery. We were now handed to our cart and commenced our journey with a similar escort to that of yesterday. At one we entered the town of Toul, and halted two hours in the state prison, where we were turned loose amongst a set of unfortunate wretches condemned to the galleys. We were to our great joy released from their company, and learned that our detention had been occasioned by the want of a guard sufficiently strong to escort us. They had now procured only two gendarmes, but they very prudently took the precaution of doubly securing us, by chaining us to the cart before they ventured to set out with us.

In this manner we were conducted to Mont Pont, where a very strong and well-built prison afforded us quarters for the night, and put all thoughts of attempting to escape from it out of our heads. The following day brought us to St Michael, where a very elegant State prison again received us. Here we were detained a whole day in consequence of the grand fête "Napoleon." During this halt we were confined in a room with a lady condemned to the guillotine for having murdered her husband, and a gentleman in the same predicament for shooting in cold blood one of his own servants who had offended him. They both seemed perfectly devoid of any real sense of their crimes or situation, as most of the day the gentleman's time was taken up improving his dress and humming opera tunes, whilst the lady busied herself in repairing her complexion, on which time had made considerable ravages. I have since learned that they were executed about a month afterwards, retaining their indifference to the scaffold.

The next morning at day-break we set out for Verdun. About two we took some refreshment at the half-way house, and by four came in sight of the well-known place. On entering the gates we were instantly surrounded by a number of our fellow-prisoners, who most sincerely lamented our misfortune, and condoled with us on our present unfortunate situation. Many of the inhabitants even testified great

sorrow at our being retaken, and assured us that it was the universal wish that we might escape. On arriving at the gates of the Citadel we were obliged to take leave of all our friends, when we were conducted to the Tour d'Angleterre, an excessively strong tower situated on an angle of the ramparts, which many years ago had been built as a State prison for the Duke of that name. Here we were immediately visited by the satellites of General Virion, who proceeded to search us without delay. We were obliged to strip to the skin, when every article of our dress underwent the most minute survey, during which they not only discovered our saw, but likewise the remainder of our money, which they took possession of. The discovery of the saw occasioned them great triumph, and procured us the honour of being loaded with about 50 lb. of irons each, when we were left, with a little bread and water and a small portion of straw, not the cleanest in the world, to our reflections.

You may imagine our time was not passed in the most agreeable manner. We, however, on finding an old pack of cards among the straw, managed to play a match at whist, though rather inconvenienced by our handcuffs.

The following day we were conducted before General Virion to undergo an examination relative to the mode of our escape. On our first appearance he gave way to the most immoderate passion, and

after shaking his fist in our faces, honoured us with every term of abuse in the French language; but his rage was altogether without bounds when, in the course of our examination, he learned that we had committed irregularities for the express purpose of being arrested, which plan had so well answered our expectations. He told us plainly that we were liars, on which we refused to answer another question, nor could all his threats extract one single sentence more from us, so that he sent us back to our dungeon vowing vengeance on us for our audacity. At the expiration of three days we were cheered by the welcome intelligence, communicated by our gaoler, of his having permission to allow us any provisions or drink we chose to order, to be paid for out of our money in their possession. We were not long in availing ourselves of this indulgence, and soon had an excellent dinner and wine before us, to which we did great justice. The gaoler was even so complacent as to release us from our irons during our meal; he, however, took good care to replace them on its being finished. We had now been six nights in our dungeon, when at midnight we were awakened by the drawing back of the bolts and opening of the doors of our prison, when in marched our gaoler attended by six gendarmes armed *cap-à-pie*, who without any verbal communication began to release us from our irons, which they had no

sooner accomplished than they led us to the door, where we observed a long covered cart, into which we were directed to mount, when we were again handcuffed, and a gendarme placed himself alongside each of us. The whole of this was performed without any answer being made to our frequent question of where they intended taking us, and the mysterious manner in which the whole was conducted led us to believe that they were carrying us to the temple at Paris where most likely we should make a very pretty finish to our adventures. This apprehension vanished immediately on our getting clear of the town, as we then, much to our satisfaction, found ourselves on the road to Bitche, which had long been the place of punishment for prisoners who had committed any irregularities at any of the other depots. We had proceeded at least two miles from Verdun before we could extract a single word from any of our guards, when at length the officer who commanded the party gave us to understand that he had positive orders from General Virion to treat us with the utmost rigour on our route, and not hold any communication with us. He said that he did not see any necessity for using such harsh measures, and that now he was from under the observation of his superior he would not only take upon himself to deviate from his orders in that particular, but, as he had been at Verdun during the whole

of our stay there and knew us to be "brave gens," he would release us from our handcuffs, and even permit us to put up at taverns instead of conducting us from prison to prison, if we would give him our word of honour that we would not take advantage of these indulgences to attempt to make our escape. We most thankfully agreed to his proposal, and were instantly disencumbered from our handcuffs, when he observed to us that now he should consider us in the light of fellow-travellers, as we should be permitted to do just as we pleased; but at the same he assured us that if any of us escaped from him he should most certainly lose his head for having acted so directly in opposition to his orders. We thanked him for the generous and unlimited confidence he placed in us, and redoubled our protestations of not taking any improper advantage of his extraordinary goodness.

At daylight we halted to change horses at a small village, where we breakfasted most deliciously on milk just from the cow, and at three in the afternoon we arrived at the large and handsome city of Metz, where we took up our quarters at the best tavern in the place. After having ordered the best dinner the house afforded, we dressed ourselves and walked out to view the town, whilst our guards went in different directions to visit their friends, leaving us perfectly masters of our actions. It is impossible to give you an

idea how much we enjoyed our little liberty after our close confinement. The town of Metz, which is most delightfully situated, appeared doubly so to us, and the view of its cathedral, which is considered one of the finest in Europe, filled us with admiration. We then visited the Grand Square, the Government House, and the public walks, where we saw a numerous assemblage of those beautiful women for which Metz is so celebrated. By this time it was beginning to get late, and we returned to our hotel, where, in company with our kind guard, we made an excellent dinner, and retired to enjoy a delicious night's rest in capital down beds—what a contrast to what we had been accustomed to for some time past.

At break of day we recommenced our journey, and, in short, continued to get on in the same comfortable manner for three days more, when the Fort of Bitché made its appearance before us. I shall here endeavour to give some idea of that strong fortress, which has during the whole course of the present war been the terror of the English prisoners, both from the supposed impossibility of escaping from it, and the excessive severity of treatment known to be experienced by those who had the misfortune to be sent there for punishment and security. It is situated amongst a chain of mountains known by the name of the *Montagnes des Vosges*, extending along the left bank of the Rhine, from which it is distant about sixty miles in a

north-westerly direction from Strasbourg. It stands upon the summit of a high rock, which rises out of a basin surrounded by mountains to the height of about four hundred feet, the last one hundred and fifty of which are perfectly perpendicular and surfaced with mortar work, forming a rampart in which no breach can possibly be made. The summit is crowned by a parapet wall with embrasures, within which there is a range of barracks extending from one extremity of the fort to the other, and underneath those buildings the rock is excavated, with amazing labour, into numerous caverns or *souterraines*, to the depth of thirty feet, and capable of containing a garrison of ten thousand men during a siege, when the whole of the buildings might be knocked down and every part of the fortress become bomb-proof. It is well supplied with excellent water by a well cut through the solid rock to the level of the plain below, being the astonishing depth of four hundred feet. The daily supply of water is hoisted up by a wheel worked by ten men; they raise about a ton of water each time in two large casks suspended by a chain, on the principle of a draw-well. On reaching the top they are emptied into a cistern, from which pipes convey the water to convenient parts of the fort where there are pumps. The whole of this water apparatus must have been formed at great expense, as the well is fourteen feet in diameter at the top, and must

be equally wide at the bottom to admit of the casks passing each other on their passage up and down. The different cisterns and pipes are likewise cut out of the solid rock. It was built during the reign of Louis XIV., and it is said that prince, on being told the enormous sums of money it had cost, asked if it was built of dollars.

At the foot of the rock stands the small town of Bitche, without any other protection but what the fort affords it. On the advance of the Prussian army into France in 1794, they sat down before Bitche, and after a regular siege of three months, during which two attempts were made to carry it by storm, they were obliged to raise the siege after losing twenty thousand men before it; indeed it is my opinion that it may be pronounced impregnable.

Such was the place in which we had now the pleasant prospect of being detained during the remainder of our imprisonment in France, which had no prospect of being terminated but by peace, for which the political state of Europe forbade us to hope. Few attempts had been made to escape, and those few had been attended invariably with the destruction of the rash adventurers. One instance occurred a few months previous to our arrival there. A lieutenant and four midshipmen of the Navy, having made a rope of their blankets and sheets, managed to cut their way out of one of the souterraines during

a very dark and tempestuous night. They had actually reached the ramparts and fixed their rope, when they were discovered by one of the sentries, on perceiving which they all jumped on the rope at once, when the villainous sentry cut the rope with his sword, and precipitated them from nearly the very top to the bottom of the ramparts. The ill-fated lieutenant who was underneath was killed on the spot; two of the midshipmen were so much injured by the fall that they afterwards died in the hospital; the third dislocated both his ankles, which crippled him for life; and the fourth escaped without being the least hurt, by falling into a small pool of water, where he was found by the guard. It is singular that the very young man so fortunate on this occasion was the same who, on our second escape from Bitche, had the misfortune to break his leg. Several other attempts, equally unsuccessful and fatal, had been made, but it remained for us to prove to the French Government that Englishmen, resolved and determined, could even get out of Bitche. I must acknowledge that on our first entering it we did not entertain the thought of ever attempting our escape from a place that from every account appeared as impossible for a prisoner to get out of as for an enemy to get in, and it was not until some time afterwards that we began to think it practicable.

We were put into one of the souterraines already described, where we found about fifty of

our unfortunate countrymen, principally officers. In a very extensive souterrain adjoining this were two hundred seamen and soldiers, and a few of each sort, who had conducted themselves with the greatest propriety, were permitted to live above ground in the barracks. We resolved to regulate our conduct so as to merit the elevation into the rooms as soon as possible, both for the sake of comfort and from the conviction that if an escape were practicable it must be from above. The treatment of those confined in the souterraines was most rigid. At eight o'clock in the morning the doors were unlocked, and we were permitted to take the air in a yard in the centre of the fort until eleven; we were then shut below until two, when we were again liberated until six, at which time all the prisoners in the fort were shut up for the night. Those above had the liberty of the yard during the whole of the day. The Commandant, M. Clement, was a very humane man, and put in force the orders of the Government with as much lenity as possible. He generally paid us a visit once a day, and always acted in the most gentlemanly manner. Before we had been three weeks here, our medical friend got so much into his good graces that, on his being seized with a slight fit of fever and ague in consequence of the dampness of our subterraneous habitation, he was permitted to remove to one of the rooms above, where three of his friends, officers in the Navy,

who had attempted to escape from Verdun about four months before, were confined. It happened most fortunately for him that they had for some time before been projecting a plan of escape; everything was in readiness, and the very evening he was allowed to join their party was the one fixed for carrying their plan into execution. You will easily conceive that he embraced with eagerness so favourable an opportunity. They managed matters so well that nothing of their escape was known until daylight the next day, when the rope was seen by which they had descended the ramparts, and all the fort alarmed by the firing of the alarm guns. It is impossible to give you an idea of the impression this successful attempt had on every individual in the prison, and particularly on us, as it revived all our former hopes of escaping, and now that it was proved possible we determined to get away or perish in the attempt.

For some time after this attempt we were treated with greater severity than before, and a double portion of sentries was now placed every evening at eight o'clock. Two months passed after this occurrence before our very exemplary behaviour procured us the indulgence of living above ground, when we were all placed together in one of the rooms of the barracks. No sooner had we gained this very material point than we began projecting a plan of escape. The first difficulty which presented itself was that of

procuring means of forming a rope to descend the ramparts. Every possible precaution was taken to prevent anything entering the fort which might be converted to that use. We, after a considerable time, managed to overcome this difficulty by using our shirts, sheets, towels, trousers, and small quantity of linen which we at times purchased under the pretence of making shirts. Suffice it to say that at the commencement of December we had formed a rope of the above materials sufficient in every way for our purpose. In the same room in which we were confined were eight other prisoners, to whom we did not think it expedient to communicate our intentions, which rendered it absolutely necessary to carry out our preparations with the greatest secrecy. The rope had been made in bed while those about us slept. The regulations of the fort permitted a member of each mess to descend with a strong escort into the town of Bitché twice a week for the purpose of purchasing provisions for the whole. On one of these occasions we managed to purchase a gimlet and small keyhole saw, and having no chance of getting anything further to ensure our plan, we resolved to risk an immediate attempt.

The winter had now completely set in, and snow had fallen in large quantities for several days, so that the ground was covered to the depth of several feet. We concluded this would be the

most favourable moment, as it never once entered the heads of our guards that we would attempt to escape during the excessive rigour of the season, when, if we even got clear of the fort, we could scarcely help perishing in the fields by the severity of the weather. These considerations, though they naturally occurred to us, were not sufficiently strong to oppose the hopes we entertained of gaining our liberty even at the double risk of our lives, which we now indeed considered of very little value, deprived as we were of every blessing and comfort which renders life desirable.

That you may form the better idea of how we effected our escape, it may be necessary to give a short description of the barrack in which we were confined, and the disposition of the sentinels about it. This building, as I have already mentioned, is placed in the centre of the fort with a narrow yard extending on each side of it to the ramparts, to which it fronts both ways. On one side were the quarters of the gendarmes and troops of the garrison, and on the other the rooms in which we were confined. On our side the sentries were at all times so numerous that it was quite impossible to pass through them to the ramparts without being inevitably discovered, but we managed to get information that until about 8 o'clock at night the sentries were very thinly placed on the other side of the building, and upon this we formed our plan.

The front and rear of the barracks communicated with each other by two staircases leading into each yard and joining at a landing-place where there was a door very strongly secured. The door of our room opened on this landing, and was fastened by a very strong lock within, and large bolt and padlock without. We determined therefore to force our door the best way we could, and then to cut through the other on the landing-place so as to get into the yard on the front of the building before the additional sentries were placed.

The 8th of December 1808 was fixed as the day that should determine our fate. It had blown a severe gale of wind with a heavy fall of snow during the day, and the night set in in every way favourable to our undertaking. The rattling of the tiles and whistling of the wind through the building was sufficient to drown any noise we were likely to make, and the excessive bitterness of the cold made it probable that the sentries would take shelter in their boxes. At dark we were as usual locked in our rooms for the night, when we immediately communicated our design to the other prisoners, who were no sooner acquainted with our plan than they un-animously agreed to join in the attempt. Thus reinforced we began our operations with redoubled vigour, and the inner lock of the door was very soon forced. We then fixed our rope to it, and with one general effort tore the bolts from the

outside, and dragged the door into the room with a famous crash. This obstacle being removed almost in an instant gave us considerable time to cut through the other, which, however, was not accomplished until within a quarter of an hour of eight o'clock. That no confusion should take place in descending the ramparts, we drew lots to decide the turns in which we should go, agreeing at the same time that no more than one should get on the rope at once lest it should break. It fell to the lot of a lieutenant of the Navy to lead the party (I was fifth on the list). We pulled off our shoes and stuck them in our pocket-handkerchiefs tied round our waists. Each took as much provisions as he could carry and a small bladder full of brandy. Thus equipped we passed the hole in the door and proceeded down the staircase, passing by several of the doors of our guards, whose voices we could plainly distinguish. On reaching the lower door, to our great joy we found it open, and were proceeding through it with great precipitation, when we beheld close to us three gendarmes advancing with a lantern. We instantly retreated back to the landing-place, where, throwing ourselves down close to the ground, we saw them enter and go into one of the rooms on the ground floor. Had they mounted to the second floor we must inevitably have been discovered, which to all acquainted with the disposition of the garrison of Bitche, is

known to be certain death. No sooner had they entered the room than with hearty step we again descended, and creeping on hands and knees through the snow safely reached the ramparts. Our rope was quickly fastened; he who was to go first had mounted one of the embrasures; the second was in the act of mounting, and the rest of us were ranged along the parapet wall in the order in which we were to descend, when we discovered the guard approaching to relieve the watch and place the additional sentries. They came so suddenly upon us that we had not even time to change our positions in the smallest degree, but all remained fixed as we were and still as the grave in the dismal expectation of being pinned to the spot by their bayonets. They passed so close that they were nearly treading on us, and most fortunately proceeded to place the sentries at the farther end of the yard first. Not an instant was now to be lost. The first, second, third, and fourth descended with great expedition, and I could plainly hear each fall to the bottom, making a great noise on some loose planks that lay at the foot of the ramparts. My accident in my descent at Verdun determined me to be more prudent on this occasion, but notwithstanding my utmost exertion the rope flew through my hands with such velocity that, after tearing the flesh from the very bone, I quitted my hold and fell to

the bottom, without, however, receiving any other injury than the loss of the greater part of the flesh of my fingers and a boiled leg of pork which I had laid hold of with my teeth, from which it was shaken by the violence of the shock. I did not remain long to look for it, but joining those who had descended before me, we set off as fast as possible.

A high palisade obliged us to descend the rock into the very town of Bitoche, and we ran the greatest risk by passing through one of the streets in which we met several people. No sooner were we clear of the town than, with the utmost speed the depth of the snow would admit of, we made towards the neighbouring woods, and did not stop even to put our shoes on until we reached them, when we ventured to make a short halt and congratulate each other on our miraculous escape. The order in which we had descended the ramparts had divided us from one of our companions on the former occasion, and our present party consisted of Lieutenants Dacres and Butterfield of the Navy, Captain Anderson of the West India Service, with my old companion Ellison and your humble servant. Each gave a description of his descent, and we found that not one had been able to retain his hold, and that all our hands had suffered nearly alike.

About half an hour from the quitting of the fort the alarm guns showed that our escape had already been discovered, and obliged us to be doubly

cautious how we proceeded, as every village and habitation within six miles was by these signals made acquainted with the event and put upon the alert. After proceeding a little farther we deemed it most prudent to halt until the night was a little further advanced. We therefore lay down amongst the snow in a small thicket on the brow of a mountain. We were soon obliged to keep moving to prevent our being frozen by the intense cold. We continued through the remainder of the night wading through the snow without being able to distinguish any track, but keeping in what we considered the direction of the Rhine. As the country here is very mountainous it was with the utmost difficulty we made the least progress, sometimes falling into pits filled with snow, and pools of water the surface of which was slightly coated with ice. By daybreak we were very much exhausted by fatigue, wet, and cold, yet we resolved not to enter any human habitation, considering it too great a risk, so near Bitche. We scrambled up a steep hill, on the summit of which were a few scattered trees, and at the root of one of them we took up our quarters and scraped away the snow to the earth, where, finding a few withered leaves and scattered branches, we covered ourselves over with them and endeavoured to get a little sleep. This, however, the intenseness of the cold prevented. About an hour after we lay down we were seized with intense shiver-

ings, and I verily believe should have perished had it not been for the brandy we had fortunately provided ourselves with, a very small quantity of which, taken at short intervals, had an astonishing effect both on the body and mind. In the course of the day we tore up our shirts and dressed our lacerated fingers as well as we could. It was with the utmost difficulty we rendered this service to each other, as from the wounds and cold we had nearly lost the use of them. At length, after a day of extreme suffering, the night began to close in, and we were enabled to set forward in safety. On first rising from the ground our limbs were so benumbed that they would scarce perform their office, and we had proceeded a considerable distance before we had anything like the free use of them. On descending the mountain we came to a small narrow road having the recent marks in the snow of cart wheels; we followed the direction of them for some time. At length it brought us to a miserable little hovel, before the door of which stood a man bearing every mark of extreme wretchedness. We advanced to him and inquired the road to Strasbourg, when he told us that the path we were on would lead us to the main road in about two hours. We then asked him if his cottage could afford us any refreshment, when he told us he had nothing but potatoes, on which he and his family had subsisted for some time. We

presented him with a piece of silver and continued our way. We soon overtook the carts whose traces we had followed, and passed them without making any inquiries. The road now winding round the foot of a high hill, we entered a deep valley formed by two mountains descending nearly perpendicularly to the very edge of a very small river which flowed through it, so that there scarce remained sufficient room for the narrow road which wound along its banks. We had not long entered this pass when, turning an abrupt angle of it, we beheld before us an immense blaze of fire which completely illuminated the mountains to their very tops. We were at first unable to account for this extraordinary appearance, but soon discovered, by advancing a little nearer, that it was occasioned by a number of iron foundries at work. We were for some time in doubt whether to proceed or turn back. As the excessive steepness of the mountains rendered it quite impossible to quit the road, we at length determined to push forward, trusting to the darkness of the night and the vicinity of the woods for a retreat, and, in case of being discovered, resolutely bent on resistance. We had each of us during the day armed ourselves, from the tree which had sheltered us, with clubs. A short time brought us into the midst of the foundries, and we passed without seeing any one except those about the fires in the interiors of

the buildings, who were too busy to observe us. We continued to get on with great rapidity, the surface of the snow being now frozen so hard as to resist our weight. We frequently passed houses by the side of the road, and it required no small exertion to resist the temptation of entering some of them, impelled as we were by cold, hunger, and fatigue. By ten we came upon the main road to Strasbourg, on which we resolved to keep and gain the banks of the Rhine if possible before morning. It soon brought us to the entrance to the town of Niederbrunne, on which we quitted it and endeavoured to avoid the town; but this, we soon found, was attended with so much labour and so many difficulties that we were all completely exhausted and were obliged to lie down in the snow, when Butterfield fainted from want of nourishment and extreme fatigue. The remains of our small supply of brandy was given to recruit our companion, and we all began to feel sensible that human nature could not much longer support without nourishment the complicated hardships we were exposed to. This conviction, with the present urgency of our friend's situation, who felt quite unable to proceed, determined us to enter the town in search of refreshment, or at all events some place to leave our sick companion, for we were determined not to halt. Before we took this step, Ellison and Dacres went to reconnoitre, and soon returned

to us with the information of the coast being clear. They had addressed themselves to a cobbler whom they saw at work in his stall, and he had told them there were no guards or gendarmes of any description in the town, and that they might get excellent accommodation at a small public-house immediately opposite the church. We proceeded accordingly in this direction, and soon reached the place described; but instead of a small house found a large tavern, apparently filled with people. We were soon convinced that this was no place for us, and consequently traversed the town as fast as possible. We soon reached the road on the other side, where we halted a moment to ascertain whether our companion was able to proceed. He found himself a little revived, and determined to push on, as we assured him that we would halt at the first isolated house we came to. We had not proceeded far before we discovered what we all anxiously looked for. It was midnight, and all was dark and silent in the house. We took a prudent survey of it, and seeing nothing to create apprehension, knocked at the door, which was soon opened by an old man in his shirt. He seemed at first a little startled at our appearance, which was certainly none of the most prepossessing, but immediately admitted us when we told him we were travellers benighted, and in want of shelter from the inclemency of the weather

for the night. On striking a light, our clothes torn, our hands bound up and covered with dirt, and the whole of our appearance which bespoke the hardships we had undergone, soon convinced him that we were deserters of some description, and at the same time discovered to us the countenance of our landlord filled with the strong expression of humanity and goodness which immediately manifested itself by his placing before us every refreshment the house afforded. He also called up his wife and servants, made them light a fire and dry our clothes, whilst he with his own hands prepared something warm for our supper. Now that we had the means of satisfying our hunger, our appetites almost forsook us, and our stomachs were so weak that it was with difficulty we partook of the good things placed before us by our hospitable host. We, however, felt our exhausted spirits quite revived, and resolved on setting out again immediately. On communicating our intention, and inquiring how much to pay, our landlord said that he was convinced (by our leaving his house at that time in such weather) that we were unfortunate young men endeavouring to escape from France, at the same time remarking that by our hands being bound up, he supposed we had been wounded by some armed force that had attempted to arrest us, and by so doing had rendered our situation desperate. To remove this last suspicion we showed

him the nature of our wounds, on which he immediately said, "You are Englishmen who have escaped from Bitche; you have done this in getting down the high ramparts." We acknowledged that he was in the right, and as he was now perfectly acquainted with our situation, offered him all the money we could spare to conduct us across the Rhine. He said were he not so old he would willingly attend us, but as his age would not allow him to do so, he would go and bring a stout young fellow who lived at a little distance, well acquainted with the country, and as he was poor, he had no doubt but the sum we offered would induce him to undertake the hazardous business. Being fully aware of the great advantage of having a guide to enable us to avoid the posts where the gendarmes were stationed, we agreed to his proposal, on which he left the house, and in a few minutes returned with the young man in question, who immediately entered into the desired agreement with us. We paid him down half the promised sum (six louis) and the other half he was to receive on our landing on the other side of the Rhine. This arrangement being made, we replenished our bladders with brandy, filled our pockets with sausages and bread, and took most cordial leave of our generous entertainer, who was with difficulty persuaded to receive the bare value of the things he had furnished us with. The moon had now risen, and the night

though intensely cold was well calculated for walking. Our guide being well acquainted with all the by-paths, enabled us to get on with such rapidity that he flattered us with the hope of reaching the Rhine before daylight, where he assured us he had a friend who would furnish us with a boat.

About two o'clock we passed close round the fortifications of Hagneau, and by five reached a village which our guide said was only three miles from the Rhine. In this, however, he must either have been mistaken, or afterwards lost his way, for after two hours hard walking day began to break and yet no appearance of the Rhine. It was here that, jumping over a small rivulet, I missed my footing and fell up to my neck in the midst of it. In less than ten minutes afterwards my clothes were frozen to a complete icicle by the extreme severity of the frost. Daylight now discovered to us the country around filled with villages, to one of which we were quite close. We saw the necessity of concealing ourselves for the day, as our appearance would inevitably betray us, and as we could discover no shelter in the neighbouring fields, we advanced to the building next us. Situated on the outskirts of the village, it proved to be a barn in which two peasants had commenced the labours of the day. Our guide soon persuaded them to allow us to take up our quarters in the straw, for the consideration of two six-livre pieces. The snug-

ness of our berth, together with the fatigues of the night, soon procured us a comfortable sleep, so that when we woke we found the day well advanced. We now agreed that our guide should leave us, and make the necessary arrangements for passing the Rhine as soon as night set in, as we had learned from the peasants that we were only a quarter of a mile from its banks. An hour afterwards our guide returned with the pleasing intelligence of having secured a boat, and of everything being in readiness for our passage immediately after dark. You may imagine that our spirits were not a little elevated at so near a prospect of safety. It was already dusk, and our guide had just left us to prepare the boat, when a brace of lovers entered the barn, and almost instantly discovering us, fled in the utmost consternation. The noise which succeeded convinced us that the alarm was given, and that our only chance of safety was instant retreat. We were on our legs in a moment, and brandishing our clubs we sallied from the barn fully resolved to exercise them on the heads of any one who attempted to oppose us. This, however, we had no occasion to do, as those who had collected about the house opened to the right and left on our sudden appearance, and allowed us to quit the village without an effort to detain us. We ran full speed across a ploughed field frozen into hard points, which cut our feet terribly, as in the hurry of our retreat we had

only time to snatch up our shoes in our hands; we had pulled them off to ease our feet. The night was closing fast, and before we could observe any one in pursuit of us we reached the borders of a wood, in which we concealed ourselves. We remained here without being disturbed until about ten o'clock, when, having no longer our guide to consult with, we determined on gaining the banks of the Rhine and to endeavour by force, or otherwise, to get possession of a boat, as our circumstances had now become desperate. We left our lurking-place, and for some time pursued a narrow path which seemed to lead the way we wished, but had not followed it above half an hour when we were met by a man on horseback, who had advanced so near us before we had observed him that we could not avoid him. On seeing us he stopped his horse and bid us "bon soir," when we halted and began to interrogate him. He was dressed exactly in the manner of the peasants of that country, nevertheless we had strong suspicion of his being a gendarme, and to satisfy ourselves we made him dismount and undergo a most minute survey, from which, discovering nothing to confirm our apprehensions, we allowed him to mount again. He testified great astonishment at our conduct, but said he perceived by it that we were men desperately situated, and supposed it might be our wish to cross the Rhine, in which case he

would furnish us with the means of doing so, provided we would give him a sum of money adequate to the great risk of such an undertaking; he added that he was a smuggler, and had a boat, from which he had just landed, lying at the distance of half a mile off. It is sufficient to say that he completely succeeded in convincing us that his account of himself was correct and his offer so advantageous, that, after a good deal of altercation as to the sum to be given, we at length struck a bargain with him to convey us across the river for the sum of six louis d'or. He now turned his horse, and we followed close to him. As I walked by his side I told him, by way of admonition, that we were men very desperately situated, and determined to sacrifice our lives rather than be taken. I therefore advised him to be very careful how he acted, as the slightest appearance of treachery on his part should be punished with instant death. He seemed quite unmoved at this intimation, and said the risk he now ran was quite equal to our own, as he would suffer death if he were apprehended in the act of conducting us. We had followed him about a quarter of a mile, when he pointed out a light a little way before us, and said it was close to where his boat lay. We were now advancing in eager expectation of being soon out of danger, when we observed all at once a number of armed men start up in different directions around us, and at the same instant our guide, throw-

ing off his disguise, roared in a loud voice, "Tuez moi, arrêtez moi ces coquains là !" and turning his horse, rode full at me, brandishing his sword (which he had managed to conceal from our search). I had just time to seize the horse's reins to prevent his running over me, when the scoundrel made several desperate cuts at me, exclaiming, "Ah, coquain, ce vous que voulez me touer tout à l'heure." Fortunately my wet surtout was frozen into a complete coat of mail, which his blows could not penetrate, so that my ducking in the rivulet proved on this occasion the means of saving me from being severely wounded. I was now seized by several of the other men who had rushed in upon us, when, producing a rope, they bound my hands behind my back, and placed a couple of bayonets to my breast. I then found that my friends Butterfield and Dacres were also taken, but that Ellison and Anderson had by some means escaped. This being likewise perceived by the rascal who had betrayed us, he immediately tied us three together by the necks, and despatched the greater number of the party in search of the fugitives. We now discovered that our pretended peasant was no other than the head gendarme of the district, who had assumed that disguise for the purpose of deceiving us, and had likewise sent forth several others on the same service disguised in a like manner. We further learned that our sudden retreat from the barn had spread the alarm round the whole of the neighbourhood, and that not less than

five thousand men were under arms within five leagues for the purpose of intercepting us. We were therefore convinced that if we had even escaped this snare we must have fallen into some other, and that in the actual state of the neighbourhood our two companions who had so dexterously extricated themselves on this occasion had no chance of being able to elude the general search which was on foot for them.

We were now dragged by the neck to a village not far distant, and during the way were several times in danger of being strangled by the barbarous conduct of our arresters, who dragged us along without any mercy. When we entered the village we were surrounded by a vast concourse of men, women, and children, who followed us hooting and holloing until we reached the guard-house, into which we were ushered. It was a small, close, confined place, heated by a large stove placed in the midst of the floor, and to us who had been so long exposed to the keenness of the open air it felt exactly like an oven, and at length the transition became so intolerable from the crowd of people that followed us in, that we each of us fainted, to which the wretches who surrounded us paid no manner of attention, but proceeded to strip us to the skin and plunder us of everything but our clothes. This was no sooner accomplished than we were led to a small confined dungeon, where, after being securely handcuffed, we were left to our meditations, and you may be

assured they were none of the most agreeable. They were in a short time afterwards pleasingly interrupted by a humane visit from our gaoler's wife, who brought us a large dish of black pudding and a bottle of wine, off which we managed to make a very hearty supper. We took this opportunity of showing her our hands, which were by this time nearly in a state of mortification for want of dressing, on which she left us, and soon afterwards returned with the village barber and doctor, and truly he proved himself a most barbarous doctor, as he applied some application to our fingers which kept us in complete torment during the whole of the night. About two o'clock in the morning our friend Ellison was brought in by two gendarmes, with his hands tied behind his back, and quite exhausted from fatigue. After securing him with a pair of handcuffs, we were again left to ourselves, when Ellison told us that at the moment we were seized he chanced to be a little behind, and seeing what had happened, he turned and ran back for some time the same road we came. He then took to the fields, and after two hours wandering found himself on the banks of the Rhine, close to a number of boats chained to the bank. He had got into one of them, and was in the act of attempting to break the chain, when two men armed with muskets jumped upon him and secured him in an instant.

At daybreak another unfortunate companion was added

to our number, nearly deprived of the use of his limbs from the bitterness of the cold and the extreme hardships he had undergone during the night. It was some time before he sufficiently recovered himself to be able to give us an account of the very extraordinary way in which he had escaped being taken at the same moment as we were. The road along which we had proceeded for some time before had on each side of it a deep ditch nearly filled with water, the surface of which was slightly frozen over. On his discovering the ambush we had fallen into, he leaped into the ditch and was in an instant up to his middle in water. He drew himself down with his chin just level with the ice, in which painful position he remained during the whole hour that some of the party continued to search about in his neighbourhood. At length the coast being clear, he with the utmost difficulty dragged his benumbed and frozen limbs from the ditch and directed his tottering steps from the village to which he had seen us conducted. He continued to wander at random during the great part of the night, several times meeting with parties of his pursuers, from whom he saved himself by running, on which occasions he was always fired upon, but fortunately without effect. At length towards morning he was suddenly seized by four men who leaped upon him before he was aware. He then found that though he had for many hours walked and ran as

fast as he was able, yet he was not half a mile distant from the spot he had set out from.

About seven o'clock in the morning we were dragged from our dungeon and placed handcuffed upon a cart perfectly open to the snow, which now fell in great quantities. Our escort consisted of the rascal who had so dexterously decoyed us the evening before, and four other gendarmes, who did not for a moment cease to abuse us for the trouble we had given them and for causing them to be exposed to such weather. They, however, derived great satisfaction from our sufferings, which were excessive, as the sweet hope of liberty no longer held out an inducement to bear them with resolution. Both our present situation and prospects were indeed as dismal as they well could be.

About one o'clock, in passing through a small town, we attracted the attention of the mayor, who stopped our escort and very humanely insisted on treating us with a bottle of excellent burgundy and some cakes, which fortified us tolerably well for the remainder of our journey to Hagneau, at which place we arrived about five in the evening. We were here lodged in the town gaol amongst about fifty conscripts for the French army. These were by far the most comfortable quarters we had been in for many months before. The surgeon of the garrison paid us a visit in the evening and dressed our wounded fingers, when he assured us that our being

taken was the most fortunate event that could have happened to us, as mortification would most assuredly have taken place in twenty-four hours more.

The next day we were conducted in a similar manner to Niderbrunne — with this difference, that the gendarmes were very civil, and granted our request to put up at the tavern instead of the prison. They accordingly conducted us to the very house our friend the cobbler had directed us to a few nights before. We now discovered that the landlord was the mayor of the town, and the place the resort of all the gendarmes and police officers of the place, so that had we followed the friendly advice of Crispin we should have been arrested the moment we entered the door. We were not a little surprised at this piece of wanton villainy which could not have been prompted by any interested motive. This house afforded us most excellent accommodation — viz., a capital supper and famous beds. The gendarmes kept sentry over us the whole night. We found ourselves much revived the following morning from the well-timed indulgence, and stood the cold from this place to Bitche with little suffering.

At two o'clock we came in view of the fort, and in half an hour more came in view of the town. On arriving we were dismounted from our cart and marched up the rock to the fort, accompanied by a great number of men, women, and children, who flocked from

the town to see us. On entering the gates we were saluted by three cheers from our countrymen, who applauded us for the bold attempt we had made, though it had not been crowned with the success that was universally wished for. We now learned that three more of our unfortunate companions in the attempt had been taken in the neighbourhood of the fort the morning following it, so that with the exception of four we were again all in their power. I am happy to add that those four had the good fortune to reach their native country in safety, after having encountered great hardships during their march to Trieste from the severity of the season.

Our health was so much impaired from the hardships we had undergone that, on a medical survey being held on us, we were reported to be unable to bear the close confinement of the cachot to which we were now condemned. We were consequently sent to the hospital, where we remained six weeks, at the expiration of which period we were considered sufficiently recovered to undergo our sentence. The cachot or dungeon to which we were now conducted was situated in a detached part of the fort called the "gross tate," and I fancy bears a stronger resemblance to a charnel-house than to any depository for the living even in the worst dungeons in Europe. It is hewn out of the rock to the depth of about thirty feet, its dimensions about eight feet by six, and as water is constantly

dropping from every part of it, the floor is covered to the depth of at least nine inches. On one side was a small wooden platform erected above the surface of the water, on which was thrown a small quantity of dirty straw which soon furnished us with very convincing proofs that we were not the first lodgers in this loathsome abode. The little air which rendered existence possible was admitted through a small crevice near the top, so filled with three rows of iron bars that just enough light penetrated to enable one to have a full view of the horrors of the place. The entrance to it was secured by no less than three cast-iron doors with double locks. Such was the place that eight of us were huddled into, in the depth of winter, with no other covering but what I have described. There was barely sufficient room for us all to lie on the platform at a time, and no possibility of changing our position further than from sitting to standing and from that to lying. This also was the only exercise we had the means of taking. The horror which now surrounded us only served to strengthen our determination to attempt any means however hazardous of making our escape. The extreme strength of the place put a defiance to force; we therefore determined to try what stratagem could effect. We soon discovered that our gaoler lived in a room immediately above our dungeon, and that he came down regularly to see what we wanted whenever we knocked against the door or made any noise to attract his

attention. He had wine and several other little articles which he kindly sold to us for about ten times their value, and as we never disputed paying him whatever he asked, we, in a short time, became such great favourites that he would visit us as late as eight o'clock at night. On our way into the cachot we had very carefully observed the manner in which the sentinels were disposed throughout the outwork in which it was situated, and noted that there was only one on the side of the building from which the gaoler's door opened. To enter the place of our confinement we had to pass through the gaoler's room, in which we recognised a fine large rope we had often seen used for lowering down people to clean away the grass that grew on the face of the ramparts. On revolving all these circumstances we found we had nothing to do but to seize the gaoler on one of his visits, gag him, and lock him up in the dungeon, then by some means get hold of the sentinel, treat him in the same way, place him in company with the gaoler, and with the rope very deliberately descend the ramparts. This indeed was much the simplest plan we had yet adopted, and had only one objection—namely, that if any of us were again taken we should most assuredly be shot for having risen upon our guards. This consideration in our then desperate circumstances had not the effect of deterring us from resolving on the attempt. Gags were made, and that the sentinel who was

constantly placed before our grate might be habituated to the noise made by a person gagged, each of us used to place them in our mouths and bellow as loud as we could for several hours every night. The noise at first attracted his notice, but finding the same occur every evening he paid no further attention to it. Our provisions were daily brought in from the fort by some of our former companions, and by their means we succeeded in getting a small supply of cash. The hands of two of our party were still so bad as to render them totally incapable of descending the ramparts, and as they healed very slowly from the extreme badness of the air, they agreed with us in thinking we had better carry our project into execution without waiting for them. The following evening was accordingly fixed upon for that purpose, and we were all busy in making our little preparations for the excursion, when the doors of our dungeon were thrown open by a party of gendarmes, and we were told that they had orders to conduct us to a prison above ground. As our minds were at this time fixed on our plan, we were rather disappointed at this interruption. We, however, assumed the appearance of satisfaction, and followed them up to a room immediately over the gaoler's, which, though very little larger and apparently equally strong, was a palace to the dismal hole we came from. On inquiring how we had obtained so great an indulgence, we were acquainted it was in consequence of a strong petition

from all the most respectable prisoners in the fort to the Commandant, pointing out the impossibility of our existing in the horrible place we were confined in, and begging this change.

We were no sooner alone than we commenced a most minute survey of our new abode, but were very soon convinced that no force could be of any avail either on the window or door, as they were equally well secured with those below. The roof indeed seemed to offer some hope, but even that was a very uncertain one, as it was covered with lath and plaster, which prevented us from discovering of what materials it was composed. The means of carrying our former plan into execution still remained, as the gaoler continued to visit us on all demands as formerly. We, however, determined to put it off for a time, as there was some prospect of being able to manage things without resorting to that desperate plan, and we were now nearly as comfortable as we could be in any part of the fortress of Bitché. Our friends from the fort continued to bring in our daily supply of provisions, and though they were constantly accompanied by a strong escort, we managed to acquaint one of them, an officer in the Navy, with our views upon the roof, and requested him to make every observation and inquiry he could regarding the building we were confined in. The very next day he gave us the joyful assurance that the roof was made of wood, having had his

information from a person who had been in the garret above us, and he at the same time assured us that the windows of the garret were not secured by iron bars. This information determined us at once, and all our thoughts were now bent on securing the means of perforating the roof. Our gallant friend the Naval officer soon removed this obstacle by conveying to us, a few days afterwards, a small gimlet and saw similar to what we had made use of on the former occasion, and which had been procured by him in the same manner. He likewise procured cash for our bills to the amount of about eighty pounds sterling, so that nothing now was wanting to complete our preparations but a rope. Having had proof of the humane disposition of the Commandant, we were tempted to try the effect of a humble petition setting forth extreme inclemency of the weather and the shattered state of our constitutions, and begging the indulgence of hiring beds. To our great joy this permission was granted, and no sooner were they in our possession than we began manufacturing a rope from the sheets and blankets. A few days sufficed to accomplish this business in a very complete manner. We had been told that our last escape being so soon discovered had been owing to the white rope, which had attracted the attention of the sentries. To prevent this occurring again we tore up one of our old black coats and covered the rope with it.

We had now been nine days in our new prison, and everything was again in readiness; it was the twelfth of February 1809, and that night was fixed for once more tempting our fate. The great quantity of rain which had fallen during the day had nearly melted the snow with which the whole face of the country had been covered for months before, and the night set in as dismal as we could wish it. We had passed the day in regulating the manner we should work at the roof and the order in which we should descend the ramparts. This last was decided as before by lots; I was again fifth. The party consisted of six, as our two unfortunate companions were still unable to join us from the badness of their fingers. At six o'clock the gaoler paid his last visit, and had no sooner taken leave of us for the night than we commenced our operations. That we might have the benefit of our light without its being seen by the sentry, we completely covered the window by hanging one of the mattresses before it. The others with the aid of a small table formed a platform which enabled us to reach the roof. The ceiling was soon removed, when a strong row of battens nailed from beam to beam and very close together gave us great labour; it was eleven o'clock before we got through them and reached the planks of which the roof was formed. We first bored with our gimlet a number of holes from side to side of the plank, then boring two of them into one, we intro-

duced the saw, which soon accomplished the business. We had in this manner by ten o'clock got three-quarters through the plank, when the saw broke, and in a moment dissipated all our hopes, and for some time we gave up all as lost. Captain Anderson, however, taking the largest of the broken pieces, in the course of an hour managed so to fix it in a rude handle as enabled us in an hour more to finish the business. It is impossible to express our satisfaction at seeing the passage clear; the plank we had cut was three inches thick.

No time was to be lost, as it was now past three o'clock, so we took an affectionate leave of our two unfortunate friends who were obliged to remain, and mounting into the garret groped our way to the window, and experienced the most heartfelt satisfaction in discovering that our information about it had been perfectly correct. Nothing could be more favourable than the night: it blew a gale of wind, and the rain descended in torrents. We were aware that the walk of one of the sentinels was below this window, but we were pretty certain that he would prefer the shelter of his box to remaining out during such a night. One end of our rope was given down to our friends who remained, with directions to hold it until we had all descended from the building, and then to let it go, so that we might pull it to us and by that means have the same rope to descend the ramparts. The

other end was thrown from the window, and as it was not more than thirty feet from the ground we were all down in an instant, our rope was pulled after us, and creeping on hands and knees we reached the ramparts without any sentinel being visible. A great gun which was mounted here furnished us with the means of fastening our rope, and after descending about forty feet in our respective turns, we found ourselves in an outwork which proved to be a mortar battery. We cut the rope as high as we could reach, and fastening it in like manner, descended a second rampart about ninety feet high. We now concluded ourselves down, when, on advancing a few steps, we found ourselves on the brink of a third rampart, and the extreme darkness of the night prevented us from forming any idea of its height. Our rope was entirely exhausted, and there remained no alternative but either to drop from it or remain to be taken. We were not long in deciding. We reduced our weight as much as possible by stripping off our coats, &c., tying them in bundles and throwing them over before us. You may form some idea of our sensations when the first took the hazardous drop. For some time he scrubbed along the wall, and at last we heard him reach the bottom with a violent shock. He soon, however, assured us that he was not hurt, and that the bottom was rather soft. Five of us in this manner dropped in safety; but the sixth (Mr

Worth, midshipman in the Navy and son of the Admiral of that name), either from being in too great haste or from some other cause, fell on one side and unfortunately broke his leg. We were extremely shocked at the dreadful situation in which we were obliged to leave him; but we were at the same time convinced that this was the only reasonable step we could take, as he was certain of being found there at daylight when our escape would be discovered. We exhorted him to bear his misfortune with resignation and fortitude, and parted from him.

On our former escapes we had reason to observe that being five people together rendered us much more conspicuous than if we were but two or three. We therefore divided ourselves into two parties — viz., Anderson and Butterfield in one, and Ellison, Dacres, and I in the other. We scrambled down the rock, and with running soon reached the neighbouring woods. We struck into the first path that presented itself, our only object now being to get a considerable distance from the fort. We continued with all speed until daybreak, when we concealed ourselves in a thicket of brushwood and broom. So well were we here concealed that at three yards' distance it was impossible to discover us. A little after daylight we could just hear the alarm gun at the fort, which gave us great pleasure, as we were well convinced that our unfortunate companion would

now get immediate relief. Though the cold was yet excessive, and we suffered much from it through the day, yet something that inwardly told us our efforts would at length be crowned with success, so buoyed up our spirits as enabled us to support every hardship with the greatest cheerfulness and resignation. We set forward at nightfall in the midst of a violent thunderstorm, and taking the first road that presented itself followed it until about eleven o'clock, when it brought us to the entrance of a village. On attempting to pass on one side of it we found ourselves stopped by a large deep river which skirted it quite close, and obliged us to attempt the opposite side. This we found as completely hemmed in by stone quarries (into one of which Dacres fell and hurt himself very badly) that at length we determined to pass through the village. We had scarce entered it with this intention when lanterns made their appearance close before us, and the bustle which immediately ensued soon convinced us that they were on the lookout for us, and that our appearance occasioned it. We instantly turned and ran back full speed the road we came for some time, when, still perceiving the lights in our rear, we struck off it and concealed ourselves in a lime-kiln, where we lay for two hours, when everything being again hushed, and the night getting a little clearer, we struck into the fields, and soon came to a narrow road, on which we con-

tinued without any interruption until daylight. A very extensive wood on the side of a mountain afforded a secure retreat for the day, from which we had a distinct view of the neighbouring country, which was extremely mountainous and almost entirely covered with wood. We had been so bewildered during the last night's march that we had not the smallest idea of the direction we had been proceeding in. About two miles from where we were stood a small house entirely alone, which determined us to proceed to it immediately after dark, in order if possible to supply ourselves with provisions and a guide to direct our future steps. On entering it, we discovered the family to consist of two old men, one young one, and several women and children. They were a good deal startled at our first appearance, but the young man soon quieted their fears by assuring them that he knew us quite well, as he had frequently seen us at the fort of Bitche, where he had been in the habit of going to dispose of the produce of their farm. As no other explanation was necessary, we at once acquainted them with our wants, and proposed a sum of money for a guide to conduct us across the Rhine.

After a good deal of deliberation, the young man agreed to accompany us to the Rhine for six louis d'or, and to use his utmost endeavour to procure us the means of crossing it. This arrangement being made, we formed a knapsack out of some coarse

towels, and cramming it full of bacon, sausages, and brown bread, with a bottle of Kirwasser, it was braced to the shoulders of our guide (who was a stout, able fellow), and we set forward in great glee, after having paid the price required for our entertainment. We now learned from our guide that after all our wanderings we were only five leagues from Bitche, and that nearly in an opposite direction to the Rhine. This, however, we considered as a favourable circumstance, as it removed us from the line of search, and we now resolved to continue to avoid it by proceeding to the Rhine in an oblique direction. We found our guide so well acquainted with the country that we with great ease avoided every human dwelling, and at the same time got on with greater rapidity than we had hitherto done.

At daylight we took up our quarters in a thick wood close to the road. It froze hard, and we suffered a good deal from the cold; but the bacon, sausages, and Kirwasser, together with the guide's pipe, enabled us to get through the day tolerably well. The following night our road lay through intricate passes in the mountains, in which were situated several villages we had great labour in avoiding. By break of day we were all much exhausted; I was particularly so, having suffered greatly during the night from my old sprain, which had never yet for an instant ceased to be troublesome. A short time after concealing ourselves for

the day, I had a violent attack of fever and ague, which lasted several hours and left me very weak. The wood we were in was very thin, and we had all the morning been in considerable apprehension of being discovered, when our fears were greatly augmented by the noise of woodcutters cutting down the trees all around us. At length two of them came close to us, and after working for a few minutes at a tree a few paces from where we lay, they discovered us. Before they could recover from their astonishment we laid hold of them, and disarming them of their axes we insisted on their remaining with us lest they should alarm the neighbourhood. They were at first dreadfully frightened, but on the frequent assurance of our guide that we did not intend to do them the smallest harm, they soon recovered their tranquillity. They now assured us that far from betraying us they would most readily do anything in their power to assist us. They informed us of a cave at a short distance, where, they said, we should be much more secure and comfortable than where we were; and having already had proof of how exposed we were in our present situation, we soon agreed to follow them to it. We were not long in reaching it, and found it so well concealed that we deemed it quite safe to indulge ourselves with a fire, which to us was the greatest luxury. After repeated solicitations from the woodcutters that they might be allowed to go to their house, which they pointed out

to us at a short distance, and bring some part of what was prepared for their own dinner, we at length consented, but sent our guide to watch their movements, and give us timely notice if he saw them returning with a reinforcement. We also kept their hatchets as hostages. Our guide soon rejoined us, and assured us they were returning loaded with provisions. In a short time they made their appearance bearing a large can of soup, made of bacon and horse-beans, a stone jar of small wine, a few dried grapes, and a black loaf. This was a most sumptuous repast to us,—a glutton would even have envied our situation to have enjoyed the zest with which we devoured it. The hospitality of these poor fellows, together with the small wine, so elevated our spirits and recruited our strength that, as we had now the most favourable opinion of their honesty, we at last accepted their offer to conduct us through some intricate passage in the mountains which they strongly recommended our getting through before dark. In conformity with their advice we left our cave about three o'clock in the evening. Marching in the daytime was so new a thing to us that it was quite a recreation, and the view of the beautifully romantic country through which our road lay completely beguiled the labours of the way. Before night set in we had reached the easternmost mountains of the range, called the *Montagnes des Vosges*, and had the satisfaction of seeing before us

the extensive plain which stretches from their foot to the banks of the Rhine. We were seven hours in descending to it through rugged paths rendered intricate by the darkness of the night. A number of lights that were observed to our right about ten o'clock were described to us by our guide as those of the strongly fortified town of Weisserburgh, about twelve miles distant from the Rhine. He likewise informed us that we should for some time be obliged to continue on the public road, as the country was here intersected by so many rivers and canals that we should not otherwise be able to make any progress. They further assured us that there was a small town a little way ahead, situated on the river Lauter, through which we could by no means avoid passing, as it was the only bridge which crossed the river, which was much too broad to swim across at that season of the year. They represented this as a spot to be passed with great caution, as it was a *dépôt* for gendarmerie and the resort of a great many Custom House officers. One of our guides now told us that his father-in-law lived in a village close by, and recommended strongly our going to his cottage, where, he assured us, we might remain with perfect safety till midnight, when we might pass the bridge in question with much less risk than at an earlier hour. We, however, did not approve of this plan, but after a good deal of deliberation agreed to his going by himself to his father-in-law's house to

get a fresh supply of provisions and what information was possible, whilst we remained concealed in a neighbouring field. We appointed a watchword to be given on his return, and retiring a little way from the road lay down, leaving one on duty to watch the motions of our envoy, and give timely notice if he observed anything suspicious. About an hour after we heard the appointed signal, and moving cautiously to the spot discovered him, accompanied by an old man bearing a lantern. This was his father-in-law, an old shepherd, who likewise recommended our going with him to his cottage, and waiting until after midnight, when he himself would conduct us to the bridge and watch for a favourable opportunity for us to pass. We determined on doing so, and followed him to his house on the outskirts of the village, and entered it without being seen by any one. He concealed us in a hayloft, and after regaling ourselves with black bread and sour wine, we threw ourselves down to rest on the hay and slept most luxuriously, until we were awakened and informed it was now time to recommence our march. On parting with our friends the peasants we paid them handsomely for their trouble, and set out accompanied by our old guide and the shepherd, and reached the town through which we were to pass. The shepherd went to reconnoitre, and returning shortly, informed us that the gendarmes were asleep in the guard-house. Entering the town, we passed

the guard-house with great caution, and got out of the town, and, after thanksgiving, took the direct road to the Rhine; then, paying the old shepherd and taking leave of him, we ran as fast as we could to get close to the Rhine before daybreak, that we might pass it the following night. We were alarmed by suddenly meeting post-horses, which we found to our joy to be without riders. Proceeding with more caution, we again heard the trampling of horses; we retired a little way from the road and lay down on the ground. Three men on horseback passed close to us, having every appearance of guards. Leaving the road we passed through flat marshy country. At daylight we lay in a wood a little way from the road, half leg up in water, snow, and sleet. We imagined ourselves to be about three miles from the Rhine. We held a council of war as to what was best to be done, and determined on sending our guide to endeavour to find some one to put us across the Rhine. He accordingly quitted us, we being in a state of great suspense during his absence. In two hours he returned, accompanied by a peasant, who agreed to put us across the Rhine for ten pounds. After striking this bargain with him, we were alarmed by a man gathering sticks, which caused us to make a precipitate retreat into another part of the wood. Concealing ourselves close to the public road, we paid our first guide, who then left us. Several gendarmes and gardes-des-forêts passed us, which terribly

startled us, so we begged our [new] guide to conduct us more into the interior of the wood, which he did, and we concealed ourselves in a thick bush, up to the knees in water.

Night coming on, our guide informed us that we must accompany him to his house, which he said was in a neighbouring village, close to the Rhine, where we must remain concealed until he could procure a boat to put us across. Accordingly we left our hiding-place, and after about an hour's running through a complete bog, we reached the village, the guide's house being on the outskirts of it. We entered it without being seen by any one. The guide's wife was dreadfully alarmed at the hazardous business her husband had undertaken, the consequence being death if he was taken in the fact, and she used tears and prayers to persuade him to turn us out to our fate, but in vain, and a crown-piece we presented her with had more effect upon her than all her husband's eloquence. They concealed us in the garret, where they brought us a repast of horse-beans and salt pork, washed down by a bottle of sour Rhenish wine. We remained in the garret all night, and in the morning our guide told us that he had procured a man to act in concert with him who had a boat, and who lived about two hundred yards from the banks of the Rhine. He brought him to visit us, upon which he advised us to set out for his house immediately, as he assured us it was much safer walking in the day-

time so near the Rhine, as after dark the whole country was covered with Custom House officers. We had already experienced the truth of this. Knowing that our guide ran equally as great a risk as ourselves, and consequently would only advise the most prudent mode of proceeding, we determined to follow his advice, and accordingly set out, but were considerably alarmed, in passing through the village, by people staring at us, so got into the fields. After walking about an hour, we came close to the main road, on which we saw two gendarmes advancing. We lay down in a turnip field until they passed. In about half an hour we reached the house of our guide, where we were cordially received by his wife. Our guide informed us that the passage of the Rhine was excessively difficult, as every boat on it was chained at sunset and the keys delivered to the Commanding Officer of the Custom House, who kept them until daylight, when the boats were again unlocked. He said the best time for us to pass would be in the morning, immediately after the boats were unlocked, and that we therefore might lie down, and he would call us when it was time. After dining on an omelette, we lay down on the floor.

About four in the morning we were awakened by our guide, who desired us to follow him, as everything would be in readiness in a short time for our passing. He led us through a number of intricate

passages in the village, and at length we reached the outskirts of it, where he opened the door of a stable and desired us to wait there until he should tell his companions of our being there; he then left us. After waiting anxiously for about a quarter of an hour, our guide not returning, we began to suspect his honesty. The care with which he had conducted us there through passages almost impossible for us to retrace, seemed to justify our suspicions. We had likewise paid him one-half of what we had agreed to give him for putting us across the Rhine, and we had no hold whatever upon him unless we could regain his house. All these seeming proofs convinced us of his villainy. However, that we might not act rashly, we determined to remain where we were until near daylight, and if he did not return then, to endeavour to retrace our steps to his house. After remaining an hour and a half in the most dreadful state of suspense, well knowing the danger we must run if we failed in finding his house, close to the Rhine in a very populous country, and not a wood wherein we could conceal ourselves, day began to break, and we left the stable in a fit of despair, fully convinced of the treachery of our guide, and endeavouring to trace back the way to his cottage. By the greatest good fortune, after about a quarter of an hour's wandering through the intricate lanes of the village, we found ourselves, to our unspeakable satisfaction,

close to his door. We entered it, and found that he had not returned as we had expected. His wife was very much surprised at our return without him. About five minutes afterwards he entered, and was very much surprised at finding us there. We, however, found he had no intention of deserting us as we had imagined, and he accounted for his long absence from the barn by telling us that he was watching for a favourable opportunity on the banks of the Rhine for passing us safely across, and that it had at length arrived, on which he had immediately returned to the barn, but to his great astonishment had found us gone, when he concluded that we had returned to his house, whither he had instantly followed. He said that the coast was now clear, but that we had not a single moment to lose, as it was now nearly clear day. We accordingly set out with him, and returned nearly the way we had gone before to the barn, where we found two other men, who accompanied us. We proceeded with great caution to the river, and concealed ourselves in a thick brushwood on a projecting point. Soon we perceived the boat dropping down with the current, apparently fishing. She dropped close to the point, where we all jumped into her and threw ourselves down in the bottom. They pulled gently across the river, still with the appearance of fishing. At length, getting behind a small island which concealed us from the French side of the river, they pulled

violently to the opposite bank in safety.

After thanksgiving, we discharged our conductors, and proceeding to the nearest village, entered the first public-house and ordered breakfast—meantime sending for a barber, who shaved and brushed us up as smart as possible. We found we were taken for Frenchmen, and determined in future to pass as such. We breakfasted comfortably, the first time since our escape, and afterwards set out with light hearts. After taking the road for Baden, we fell in with a regiment of French soldiers, with whom we were now obliged to march some hours, as during that time we did not come to any road striking off from the one on which they were, and knew it would create suspicion were we to strike across the fields. We entered into conversation with several of them, and found they had not the slightest suspicion of what we were. We separated from them by taking the first road that offered, and determined to avoid as much as possible all towns. We marched hard all day, finding much difficulty in rounding some of the towns, and obliged, in consequence of leaving the roads, to wade through several marshes and rivers.

An hour after dark we entered a village, and taking up our quarters at the first sign that offered, found the landlord spoke French, and was a very intelligent fellow. He took us for commissaries belonging to the French army then advancing to the frontiers

of Austria. We encouraged his mistake, as we found the title to be a very convenient one. We requested him to dine with us, and got a very great deal of useful information from him relative to the police of the country, likewise a complete list of all the cross-roads to Ulm, passed a very jovial evening, and for the first time got our clothes off and into beds which, though excessively miserable, were to us beds of down.

At daybreak we set out accompanied by our landlord, who insisted on walking a few miles with us to see us fairly on our way. After we got him some way from his village we determined on acquainting him with our real situation, as we were aware of the great advantage we might derive from the information we might obtain from a man so well acquainted with the country. We accordingly did so. He was greatly astonished at what we told him, and professed a strong desire to serve us. He advised us to continue to pass as men attached to the French army, as he said the fear of the French throughout all the countries of the Confederation of the Rhine was so great that, particularly in the villages, no one would ever think of asking us for our papers whilst under that title. He likewise gave us the names of all the towns near which we must pass in Baden, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria, and pointed out those where the police were most strict, and which we ought to avoid. In short, we gained a vast deal of

information of the first consequence from him. We offered him money, which he positively refused. Taking leave of him with many good wishes on his side, and every expression of gratitude on ours, we set forward in high spirits, and marching with great rapidity passed through the suburbs of the town of [. . .?], crossed the frontiers of Baden, and entered Wurtemberg.

About two, we halted at a small hamlet, and dined on bacon and eggs, washed down by a couple of bottles of sour Rhenish, and proceeded with fresh vigour. At eight in the evening we took up our quarters in a small dirty hovel, where we got miserable fare, and no beds, much fatigued with a long march which we calculated to have been at least fifty miles.

At daybreak, after a luxurious swig of new milk, we set out and marched hard all day. I suffered much from my ankle, being obliged to limp most of the way. We passed within a few miles of the palace of Stutgardt, a magnificent building, and about four o'clock in the evening came upon the high road to Ulm.

The rest of the manuscript is very indistinct from age, many portions being quite unreadable through damp.

It is known, however, that Matthew Quirk got home in safety at the end, and settled down at Kirkcolm, near Stranraer, Galloway, and there ended his days in peace.

"FALLEN ANGELS."

IV. THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

IN a little tea-shop in the High Street of Loamington was a gathering of five Fallen Angels, busy putting away as much cake and jam as was possible between musketry parades and lecture hour. Four of them were clothed in the particularly ill-fitting garments peculiar to the corps, while the fifth, a young Angel of unusually tailor-made appearance, sported a brand-new outfit of officer's khaki. Except for the fact that his sleeves were bare of stars and braid, and that his belt was of the type worn by privates, he might have been a newly gazetted "second Loot." In order to hide the lack of stars he, generally wore a trench-coat, and was exceedingly impressed with himself because that afternoon, while parading a friend's sister round the town, a party of gunners passing through had given him "Eyes Right."

When first the fledgling Angels join they are posted to what are called the Corps companies, as distinct from the Cadet companies, which are a later stage. Here they undergo various tribulations at the hands of exceedingly overworked and under-staffed seraphim, and learn the rudiments of their new trade. After a period, whose length varies inversely with their ability, they join one of the

Cadet companies and fall into the clutches of the cherubim, who, being far better staffed with instructors and N.C.O.'s, proceed to turn them inside out in a way that is quite impossible to the seraphim in the Corps companies. By way of compensation for the extra strain they are allowed to wear officer's uniform (less the stars), travel first-class and live in a mess, where they have glasses, crockery, table-cloths, and other luxuries, the existence of which they have almost forgotten.

This sudden affluence generally leads to considerable swelled head with regard to their old acquaintances in the more humble Corps companies, who, being still mere privates, eat off tin plates and drink their beer from tin mugs. These retaliate by calling the cadets "pampered aristocrats," and taking it out of them as much as possible. It is galling, you will admit, to find the young cousin you used to lick at school lording it about in beautiful garments and generally pretending not to know you when he meets you on fatigue, looking, you admit yourself, rather like an escaped convict, in cast-off Tommy's khaki.

The four were discussing dimly the details of the morrow's parade, while the cadet was listening somewhat

distractedly to their conversation. He was very much taken up, you see, with wondering whether Phyllis would cut him if she saw him with these people, and thinking how he might borrow a Sam Browne belt for next week-end, and, if he did, whether it would be safe to wear it in town. Shipman, the skipper of his company, has an annoying way of running into you on these occasions.

The parade they were discussing was the Public Schools field-day, for the Corps companies had been detailed to act as enemy for the blood-thirsty youths of Eton, Westminster, St Paul's, &c., to flesh their lethal weapons on. The matter was made still worse by the fact that the umpires on these occasions are always biassed on the side of youth. At least that is the opinion of the companies.

"Same show as last time, I suppose," grouched Lance-Corporal M'Nab. "The d——d boys will run all the way and chase us, while we with full packs will have to retire at the double for about ten miles. We shall be given ten rounds per platoon, and the babes will have thirty rounds each. *Their* officers will ride about in the firing line, and the umpires will put *us* out of action whenever they see us. Lastly, we shall be made prisoners and led home by dirty little school-boys. Last time my young swine of a brother, ten years younger than I am, marched me in. Gott strafe all field-boys!"

"Cheer up, M'Nab," interposed the cadet. "The captains of the Cadet companies are going out to umpire this time, so perhaps you'll get off lighter."

"Suppose that means you pampered aristocrats aren't coming," grouched M'Nab. "Going to sit at home and watch us sweating out."

"Well, er—you can't expect them to take out the Cadet companies to play with a lot of boys. Of course, you're more or less—er—recruits and must expect it, but for people like us who are *practically* officers" (the speaker had joined a Cadet company from M'Nab's platoon nine days previously), "it's different."

M'Nab looked at the speaker, got up, tightened his belt, and departed speechless. So did the others. Shortly afterwards the cadet, observing Phyllis going down the road, put on his trench-coat and hurried out of the shop.

Next day, outside the two tents forming the regimental orderly-room in the camp, a great conclave of company commanders, both cherubim and seraphim, gathered together. In lieu of wings each wore on either arm large white bands provided by the "Adjer," who in company with the orderly-room sergeant was presiding over a table full of type-written schemes. At the next table in the orderly-room tent the bald head of the Assistant Adjutant emerged from behind a mound of red books like a

snowy mountain-top behind a row of sunset clouds.

The Fallen Angels keep two adjutants, a seraphim and a cherubim. (I mention them in order of weight.) They are known as Tweedledum and Tweedledee. You know them apart if seen from the front by the fact that the former is clean shaven, whereas the latter sports a moustache. From a back view they are indistinguishable.

To paraphrase the policeman's multiplication table, "twelve inches—one foot; two feet—one backyard," we might say, "four quartermaster-sergeants—one adjutant; two adjutants—one brigade."

At the far end of the tent was the C.O. of all the Angels, a small, slim figure with pince-nez and an inscrutable smile.

In the doorway between the two tents stood the sergeant-major, who stands six feet five inches, straight as a lance. His forte is lectures on discipline, which is his pet subject, but "pay duties at a glance" runs it close. We shall meet him later on at lecture hour.

The knot of Angels outside were discussing the prospect of the day's work, which the seraphim appeared to look upon rather in the light of a fatigue. To the cherubim, on the other hand, it came as a relaxation from the daily toil. The explanation probably lies in the fact that a kindly Government provides the cherubim company commanders with horses, whereas the seraphim, whose clipped wings

prevent them flying, have not yet received horses (after all they were only indented for just before the first battle of Ypres), and therefore are compelled to footslog.

Still, since to-day the lesser lights were to take command and the company commanders to umpire, things were not so bad as they might have been, and then there was always the prospect of seeing H.R.H. Prince Henry tucking away bread and jam and ginger-beer with the rest of his schoolfellows. One does not entertain royalty to tea *every day*!

A clank of spurs announced the arrival of Chenevix, the leader of D Company. His outfit was really beautiful, with field-boots and spurs to raise the envy of any divisional cavalry commander.

"Goin' cycling again, I suppose, Chenevix," said Major Carnaux pleasantly.

"No, Major," said Chenevix. "I'm joining the A.S.C. Mechanical Transport branch. Hence the get-up! Spurs aren't quite long enough, though. They told me to get extra long ones. Handy for opening petrol tins."

Carnaux is, by virtue of his profession, in touch with the Ordnance Survey, and so fills the mess with maps of all sorts, sizes, and scales. When the war broke out he was, and for that matter still is, during week-ends, Decipherer of Cuneiform Inscriptions at the British Museum. Naturally the War Office seized him as a censor for the original Expeditionary Force, and he was

one of the first men to set foot on French soil in September '14. We understand that the British Museum are contemplating a large frieze over the main entrance depicting Carnaux, with sword and buckler and wreath-circled helmet, being embraced by the women of Calais as he steps off the gangway of the leading British trireme. In person he is of medium height, and most cheerful demeanour and appearance.

In the background of the scene were various orderlies from the squadron, leading about the chargers provided for the umpires. Talking to one of them is "Broncho Bill," the squadron commander. "Broncho Bill" is one of those people you cannot look at without your mind at once turning to horses, which is passing strange, for he began life as a railway engineer in India. But then as a matter of fact people of his stamp always do gravitate to that delectable land, where even the poorest "sub" can keep a pony or two. The Makkipur railway must have had a thrusting reputation in the local tent clubs when Broncho was on it.

"When do the schools arrive?" asked Shipman, O.C. of No. 4 Cadet Coy.

"I think 9.50," said Carnaux, "but I expect Tweedledum will be collecting us in a minute for C.O.'s pow-wow, and we'll get definite details then."

"Yes, I see his old bald head coming out."

"The C.O. wants the umpires in the tent, please," called out Tweedledum.

They all trooped in and stood in a semicircle round the table, while Tweedledee issued copies of the orders. The C.O. proceeded to explain the scheme.

"The schools will form two battalions under the command of Major Burgoyne of Loamington School. They will march three miles to Bourne End, and from there advance in two columns through Pinehill Park and attack the Fallen Angels, who will be in position somewhere west of the Park. The company commanders will be detailed to schools as umpires (you'll find your schools written on your orders). When the boys have been detrained they'll fall in on the cricket ground, and I want you all to meet me there at 10.30. That's all; thank you, gentlemen."

Every one saluted, and they all marched out and strolled down to the station just as the first train-load arrived. It was mostly Carnaux's convoy, Aldenham and Merchant Taylors.

Followed Harrow with a band and a diminutive bugler who was out of the train long before it stopped in order to "sound" in good time.

The last train arrived with St Paul's, which was Lewis's (commander of No. 2 Cadet Company) special care, and he followed them down to the cricket ground, where the schools were forming up in two columns.

The cricket ground at Loam-

ington lies between the canal and the railway embankment, about the only real stretch of level ground in the place. It was occupied by a great concourse of people, collected to see the heroic youths and to listen to the unwonted music of a real "sogers'" band. All round the ground were admiring groups of sisters, cousins, and aunts, flanked by myriads of small boys and loose dogs, while various loafers as yet not combed out by the Military Service Act leant against the canal railings spitting and criticising.

The two battalions were drawn up in column facing the narrow entrance where the band was posted, and cherubim umpires were busy trying to induce their horses to get past the big drum. The central figure on the ground was undoubtedly the O.T.C. field officer commanding the schools, Major Burgoyne. Not only was his exalted rank a draw for the public eye, but also the fact of his various civic dignities added to the lustre of his presence. Loamington at large felt that with their protection committed to such able and patriotic hands they could sleep in their beds at night without fear of raiding Zep or marauding Hun. Who indeed are the Prussian Guard compared to the veterans of the Loamington O.T.C., and what child of Atilla would dare face "Our Willie there in the front, the only boy in the battalion in step"?

Around the doughy Major gyrated clusters of lesser

luminaries like minor planets round a radiant sun. Orderlies galloped frantically hither and thither pursuing errant company commanders, while strutting sergeant-majors (age sixteen) blustered and fumed with regard to the rear rank's dressing, and perspiring buglers, still younger, wrestled with pirouetting chargers. The band meanwhile puffed vigorously into their bugles, and the big drummer smote lustily upon a drum as big as himself.

Eventually the massed battalions broke into column of route, and amid the plaudits of the admiring crowd and the attention of the aforesaid small boys and dogs, swung into the High Street with the Major at their head. Dotted along the column rode the umpires.

Down the valley swung the column in the bright sunshine. The weather, marvellous to relate, was really summer; and still more wonderful, the temperature on this June day was at least ten degrees above freezing-point. (The Loamington thermometer generally breaks if it rises above 50°.) On through the town they passed while the music of the band died away in the distance, out into the smiling country, away down the London road between the high dusty hedges. Then turning north they crossed the canal and pressed on towards the rendezvous where actual operations would commence, hard by the village of Pottenham. From Pottenham towards the west extends

a long sweep of gorse-covered common, flanked on the north by the close coverts of Pinehill Park. The enemy (the Fallen Angels) were reported to be holding a position at the extreme west of the common, some four miles away, so the O.C. decided upon a frontal attack over the common, combined with a flanking movement through Pinehill Park. The climax would be reached when the harassed foe should eventually be hurled down the steep ravine at the western extremity of the common, and such as escaped drowning would be bayoneted at ease in the tangled copses at the foot around Aldbury village.

Burgoyne himself would accompany the flank attack to ensure its delivery at the correct time, for he held that the commander should be with the decisive attack, and the critical point was undoubtedly the west end of Pinehill Park, where the enemy's left might be deftly turned by a skilful thrust at the right moment.

The boys shook themselves into column once more and stepped off. The right column advance-guard had not gone half a mile when fire was opened on them, and they recoiled in disorder while perspiring subalterns hurled themselves through the prickly gorse-bushes in valiant endeavours to induce their platoons to deploy. The schoolboys being liberally provided with blank, opened a heavy fire, while the enemy (limited to twenty rounds per

platoon) replied methodically with one shot per two minutes. Signal flags fluttered right and left and centre, and the advancing column, now in fours about 300 yards away, deployed for the attack. Finally they surged forward, and a trickle of weary pack-carrying figures clambering up the banks on the opposite side of the sunken road showed that the enemy would not face the bayonet.

Evidently this was a mere hastily prepared ambush, and the Loamington machine-gun detachment, busily agitating a rattle at the side of their wooden gun, reflected sadly that their moment had not yet come. So resignedly they packed up gun and tripod and fell in again in rear of the column. Behind them were two disconsolate Angels "prisoners of war," in charge of an imp of fourteen.

The signal flags fluttered again and the force moved on—until it eventually entered the road to Pinehill Park. The high wooded banks gave good promise of further ambushes, and the Loamington commander flung out a flank guard into the woods. It was very prettily handled, and Lewis found occasion for commendation, for the work was good, distinctly good. Trained soldiers might have done worse.

For another mile no sign was seen of the foe, until at last, as they entered the Park, a ragged fire opened from some particularly thick copses on the left flank, and heavy

firing still more to the left showed that the other column was by no means having things all its own way.

But the advanced guard was more prepared this time, and the main body pursued its rapid way undisturbed till at last Shipman, cantering round a bend in the road, saw the retiring force in fours some two hundred yards ahead, while four hundred yards behind the bend came the schools also in fours. So he fled back and tactfully suggested a five minute halt to the Major, thus saving an impossible situation; and by the time the schools got under way again, the foe had vanished in the Park.

Debouching at the far end of the Park, the pursuers ran into quite a strong force strung out along the hedges, and things began to move. Platoon after platoon of whooping boys flung themselves forward on the foe, while the umpires, despairing of handling the situation with the cool judgment and impressive dignity that umpiring requires, retired into quieter corners for drinks and smokes, till finally the chief umpire bethought himself of the "Stand fast!" and bid his bugler sound the call.

This was the signal for the immediate cessation of hostilities, and the boys, regardless of the foe, proceeded to lunch — the most important part of the day.

To Lewis, seated on a fallen tree refreshing himself with stale sandwiches, entered

Broncho Bill and his sub-altern.

"What price this picnic?" queried Lewis. "Merry, isn't it?"

"You wait till this afternoon," said the cavalryman. "Just wait till the forces really close. A rugger scrum isn't in it! Nobody listens to any one at all, and everybody charges at anything they see. The favourite range for firing is one yard, and the umpires' chargers are the usual mark——"

"Don't I know," said Lewis. "I was trying to instil a little order into a scrum back there on the road, when an excited youth hurled himself out of a bush headlong under my horse's nose. I just managed to pull up this side of the railway. Don't know where Shipman's got to. Last time I saw him he was on foot, cursing like blazes 'cos he'd lost his horse. So I'm trying to look after his lot of youths as well as my own, and having no end of a time. However, this lot don't eat sweets on the march, like the last crowd. Influence of the war on the young idea, I suppose! There goes the 'Carry on!' so we'd better mount again."

In a little copse near the west end of the common, war-worn No. 17 platoon was strung out in a straggled line. The men, who had been on the run since before midday, lay resting in the cool shade of the tall beeches, listening to the distant sounds of strife, thank-

ful that for the moment no enemy were paying them any attentions. The sun was for once overpoweringly hot, and the wearied Angels were more than grateful for the short respite. Through the trees on the flanks one could catch glimpses here and there of moving khaki figures, but in front, over the straight white road where the little white-walled, red-roofed lodge nestled among the dark-green foliage, all seemed quiet, almost deserted, save for the buxom figure of the lodge-keeper standing by the gate, shading her eyes as she looked down the long, dusty road watching the ebb and flow of the mimic fray. A listening rabbit at the edge of a belt of bracken sat up for a moment, and then scuttled away at some faint far-off noise.

"Wonder what time we'll get home to-night," groused Lance-Corporal M'Nab to his Fidus Achates, Lance-Sergeant Williams. "I wish to heavens the show would finish. I've had enough to last me for the next fortnight." Williams said nothing, but listened to the rattle of musketry on his right flank. He was considering how to extricate his platoon from the *cul-de-sac* of the wood, into which they had retired. The platoon, some seventy strong, had got separated from the main force, since the company on their right, who had been driven in a little while previously by a wild rush of schoolboys, was now retiring hastily over the common towards an entrenched position

at South Chapel occupied by the Reserve companies. On his left, Williams could hear distant shots and cheers, much whistling and occasional words of command, which showed that some movement was afoot, but so far he had not been able to ascertain what exactly was doing, and so had decided to remain where he was.

"I wonder if there's any chance of any food," said the persevering M'Nab. "Also, what about a long glass of beer? I could just . . ."

"At the advancing enemy—two hundred—fire," roared Sergeant Williams, and the platoon pulled themselves together in time to let drive at the hordes of Highgate just bursting their way through the thickets in front across the road.

Before the platoon had really warmed to their job they found their right flank being driven in by a mingled rush of Highgate and Loamington. Sergeant Williams swung round a section to face the new peril, but as he did so warning shouts from his left showed that the enemy were coming on in force on that side also.

"We're for it now," moaned M'Nab, as he discharged his rifle at point-blank range into the Little Mary of a diminutive youth in front of him.

"No. 17 Platoon. Retire by alternate sections," yelled Williams. "M'Nab, your lot first! Quick!!"

Even as the first section rose and turned to double off, the commander of the schools, a

heroic figure on horseback, followed by two orderlies, also mounted, pushed through the brushwood in rear, and, sitting there like Napoleon at Austerlitz, twenty yards from the foe, commanded: "Now then, lads, bring up that machine-gun as fast as you can," and a new horde of Loamington boys hurled themselves after their leader, firing rapid into the trapped Angels, while those who had no ammunition slapped the butts of their rifles, or swung their rattles lustily. The machine-gun clicked away merrily under the feet of the battalion commander's horse at fifteen yards from the enemy.

Lewis, pushing through the crowd, forced his way into the centre of the surging mob, where, packed into a space of about fifty square yards, the dauntless remnant of No. 17 platoon faced all ways at once to make head against some three hundred schoolboys.

He felt that the correct thing to do would have been to have put the gallant Major out of action first, but he reflected that it would hardly have been cricket to have deprived him of one of the few days when he really did get a full battalion to command. So he hurriedly turned to Sergeant Williams—

"Afraid your platoon is done in. Sling arms and march them in rear of the school."

"Told you so," groused M'Nab, as they fell in. "We are always put out of action. I shot their bally Major nine

times, at something under thirty yards."

"Hulloa, Jack," piped a shrill treble, "done in again!! Call yourselves soldiers?!" This from a diminutive figure of a schoolboy escort, who carried a wooden gun. "Always march you home each time. How much if I don't tell Nell that I took you prisoner? She'd never kiss any one who'd surrendered."

"Oh, dry up, you young fiend," jerked out M'Nab. "I tipped you five bob last time I saw you!"

"Yes, but it's mid-term now, and I'm broke. Also, I want to buy a new bat. How much is it going to be? She told me to tell her if I saw you."

Having achieved this deed of slaughter, the schools pushed out into the final of the fight on the common, where the scene was truly Homeric. Shipman counted not less than four attacks and three counter-attacks going on at one and the same moment. Every one appeared to be obsessed with the idea of charging something or someone else. If, while engaged in attacking one objective, another more tempting appeared the boys swung off on to that, regardless of allotted frontages. "Casualties" rose up and charged in masses at unsuspecting platoons standing near; small boys, yelping wildly, charged weary Angels or, failing Angels, others of their own kidney; at one point a medley of Angels and schoolboys were making common

cause in rushing the Corps machine-gun section.

Here and there in the turmoil of khaki, feminine figures of frightened aunts and sisters showed up like wreckage in a whirlpool. The umpires had long since given up hope of restoring order, and were careering all over the place in search of the chief umpire, to suggest a cessation of hostilities. Eventually a bugle rang out, and then more bugles, and the firing died away, and panting subalterns began to collect their scattered flocks, while C.O.'s and company commanders assembled for the pow-wow.

Said Shipman to Lewis, as order having been restored they were riding back—

"Some nightmare, what? But the schools enjoyed themselves, I fancy."

"Yes," said Lewis. "Consider. The school O.T.C.'s are now 'it.' See how the war fever has caught every one down to the smallest fag. A school is very much an image of the country it is in. When I was at school in France we wore a uniform, kepi, chevrons, &c. We had a drum and bugle band, and the *sous-officiers* were personages. We talked of glory and tried to look like soldiers. The more important we were in the school the more military we became.

"At school in England, I remember how the average boy looked down upon the school corps. To enter it was practically to lose caste. If you joined the 'Dog-shooters' you

were looked upon as more or less insane. Merely the young idea following their parents' train of thought; the whole of English ideas on 'militarism' generally visible at a glance in almost any school. It's rather amusing. Comes the war: the papers go daft, slobbering over the military they sneered at six months back. The school-boys rush to join their school corps. It's a quaint world. I often wonder how these school O.T.C. officers, who laboured against every disadvantage in the dead old days before the war, can speak kindly to the new members who stood out before. I suppose it's the military tradition. We don't spend our days gibing at the newly joined who used to gibe at us. We merely thank our stars that the country's sane at last. If only old Roberts had lived to see this to-day. These O.T.C. fellows must have a lot of his spirit. Instead of sitting down to say 'I told you so,' they buckle to to teach you and say nothing about all the times they vainly implored you to join for the sake of your own honour, which is your country's honour. Every screw doing its share in the machine at last, long last. When these boys grow up we shall have an army ready to hand, instead of a lot of undisciplined, football-watching, weedy-looking, graceless youths. We shall be ready for war, and then, thank the Lord, we won't get it. *Si vis pacem para bellum*. Jolly good motto that for any school O.T.C."

"Sure!" replied Shipman.

V. THE BIRTH OF *ESPRIT DE CORPS*.

It was very early morning in Loamington—to be precise it was 5.15 A.M. of a May morning. It was also damp and muddy, and the air was very raw. On the slope of the common, facing the town, No. 2 Cadet Company was just coming out of the trenches, where they had passed the night, for cherubim and seraphim alike have weird, fanatical ideas about training, and think that because one is at war, one should therefore lead as uncomfortable a life as possible. Phayle and Gamaliel are, if possible, even "dafter" on this point than the remainder. So behold the company clambering painfully out of the trenches, very muddy, dog-tired, and chilled to the bone. They were laden with picks and shovels and coils of wire, and in the early dawn, the packs seemed even heavier than usual. Also they were fed-up with work, and as an extra reminder of their slavery they could see below them, nestling peacefully in the valley, the sleeping camp of another company. Lucky devils—they didn't have to spend nights in the trenches!

They assembled wearily and slowly, and the platoon commanders endeavoured to get them into some formation, but why should they worry about dressing on a show like this? "People at the Front don't trouble about dressing—they kill Huns." Eventually the Sergeant-Major having snapped

off several people's heads, and the Sergeant Instructor of No. 4 platoon having addressed exceedingly sarcastic remarks to his men, the company was reported present.

Lewis, who had been conferring with Phayle in the front-line trench, walked over, looking more than usually sallow and livery in the chill morning air. Instead of marching off the company, he ordered arms and started talking, while the cadets shivered at attention. He appeared to be displeased with life, and his remarks were extremely crisp.

Firstly, he asked Phayle for his opinion of the night's work, for the cadets had been supposed to be at work all night. Phayle cleared his throat about three times, and then in a dry, despondent tone, said that the chief points that had struck him were the general air of slackness and lack of interest, and the amazingly poor output of work. After which he cleared his throat again, and said he had nothing further to say!

Then Lewis got down to it, and made a small speech, which was chiefly studied insults. He said that there were three salient features about the night's work, or should he say, lack of work—firstly, the most disgraceful slackness; secondly, the absolute lack of interest and intelligence displayed by the cadets, practically without exception; and

lastly, the amount of work executed. He said he'd known a tired company of Indians do more in half an hour with an entrenching tool than No. 2 could do in six hours with full-sized tools, and to finish up he said that the lack of discipline and the slovenly turn-out would have disgraced a brand-new draft of recruits. To wind up the oration, he announced that the company would spend the morrow's night repeating the work, and if considerable improvement was not noticed, all leave would be stopped. He then named a couple of cadets, to whom he had evidently taken a dislike, and stopped their leave for three weeks straight off. (In cadet companies we always get leave from Saturday midday till Sunday night.) After this he allowed them to march home.

Said Cadet Greenway to Cadet Robinson, "What a tripehound the fellow is—keeps us out all night and expects us to work the whole time, and then talks like that in the morning. Might be a damned Hun by the way he goes on. Wish to Heaven we'd gone to a company where they treat you like gentlemen."

"Same here," responded Robinson.

"Then there's that vile trick of his of making us all sling arms on the same shoulder, and dancing up and down the column like a cat on hot bricks, to check our dressing and step on the march; as if all that

old-fangled twaddle mattered in war-time."

"Yes, and Phayle's worse than he is. Asked me yesterday if I wanted a commission, and when I said 'Yes,' told me I wasn't likely to get one the way I was going on—said we had such a light time here that we might at least have the decency to work while we were on parade!! *Light time*—I like that!"

"I know the sort of thing," sympathised Robinson, "the usual way these beastly regulars talk. I was speaking to my brother about it; he's just got his commission in a jolly fine regiment, the 3/39th Wessex Rifles. He said it was all rot, and wondered I didn't try and get a transfer. I told him how much I knew before I got into a cadet company at all, and he said any C.O. would be glad to get me at once to take a draft straight out to France; and now these bounders come along and talk to me as if I was a schoolboy, and tell me I'm as ignorant and as lazy as I can possibly be. The frozen limit, I call it."

Just then the company passed a few early risers of another company, who were sleepily admiring the dawn. They gazed with astonishment at No. 2 and made several comments, apparently facetious, judging by their expressions. This was the last drop in the cups of Greenway, Robinson, and the rest of their fellows of No. 4 platoon, and they relapsed into a stony silence, while the company pursued its saddened way

homeward, where they were dismissed with the request—"Would they at least try and *look* like soldiers the next time they came on parade."

"Need some handling yet," said Phayle to Lewis, as they walked home to breakfast.

"Yes," answered the skipper, "but they're not half a bad lot really, only they're mostly babes, and imagine that the sole thing they've got to do to become efficient officers is to buy a Sam Browne; but they've got the makings of a jolly good company."

"Some of the others jeer at them a bit," interposed Gamaliel—"gibe at them for working so much, and so forth and so on, and altogether they're rather fed-up. They've got an idea that we're all brutal martinets."

"I wonder what they'd have thought of the life of the newly joined subaltern in pre-war days?" remarked Lewis. "I'd like to have seen my senior subaltern and sergeant-major teaching 'em. I think they'd have broken down from nervous strain after a fortnight of what I had when I joined."

One morning in the middle of June, No. 3 platoon was lying down by the roadside during the midday halt discussing life in general. The rest of the company was spread around doing likewise. Lewis had just been addressing a few of his choice remarks anent discipline to the company and sketching out the afternoon's programme for them. It appeared to be even more stren-

uous than the morning's effort. Owing to a batch of newly-commissioned having just left, the No. 4 platoon of last month, with one or two exceptions, had gone up in the world and were now No. 3. Robinson and Greenway were holding forth on *esprit de corps* and dissecting Lewis's speeches on the subject.

Quoth Robinson, "I quite agree with what he says about looking smart on parade. One can quite see that it's nicer to be in a company that drills decently, and is a pleasure to look at on parade, handles arms smartly and so forth. But I couldn't follow that twaddle he talked about officers looking smart at all times, on parade or off. Then *what* was that blither he talked about an officer's stars being 'badges of servitude' or words to that effect? Conveyed nothing to me."

"Oh, I followed him all right there," replied Greenway, "but I should say it's exceeding doubtful if he's sane. Apparently his theory is that an officer, by virtue of his position, is the servant of his men, and in consequence ought to do more work than them. When the ordinary day's work is finished he should be running round doing extra work in order to make them more comfortable, while they go off and rest; or sweating away learning more, in order to teach them better. Lying awake at night thinking out schemes to make their life more interesting or their hardships and dangers less. Seems absolute drivel,

but that's what he was saying. I've got two cousins just gazetted in the new army, but they don't seem to waste any time that way. They always cut away directly parade's dismissed and catch the first train up to London to have a good time. They tell me that's what the men expect an officer to do, and would look down on him if he pottered around in camp when he might be at the Empire."

At this point Lance-Corporal Meadows, a thoughtful-looking man, somewhat older than the rest of the platoon, joined in the argument.

"I wonder if your cousins know quite as much as our officers do about the army and about what the men think? I saw Mr Phayle working in the office last night at 7 P.M., and we were dismissed at 5, and jolly glad to get away after that march."

The previous day the platoon had been out most of the day doing a rearguard action, and suffered considerably at the hands, or rather tongue, of their instructor.

"I expect he was writing letters," said Robinson.

"No, he wasn't," said Meadows. "I think he was correcting the reports and sketches we made yesterday. It's not the first time I've seen him working at that time either."

"And Mr Silver" (that's "Gamaliel") "was here all Saturday and Sunday getting the new mess-tent ready, and getting in furniture and so forth to start the mess. I

know that, because I was house-guard and so didn't get away for the week-end. I wonder if your cousins do anything like that." This from Corporal Wren, one of the steadiest of the cadets. For the moment he is commander of No. 3 platoon.

"Anyway," said Robinson, "Captain Lewis is a slave-driver, and makes us work a jolly sight too hard. And he's always gassing about discipline, as if it was the only thing that mattered. Strafed me like blazes yesterday because I had on a pair of Bedford cord breeches. Told me that if I couldn't learn to obey how did I expect to command any one. Just like him to give orders that we weren't to wear cord breeches. What *on earth* has that got to do with war? In my brother's regiment they wear what they like. He always comes home on leave every week-end in field-boots and spurs. Why the blazes shouldn't you wear what you like? What has that got to do with winning the war? I don't see that it's got anything to do with discipline either."

"He told me something in that line, because he saw me with bright buttons instead of the beastly black ones we're dished out with. I believe his idea is to annoy us as much as possible. Don't you think so, Meadows?" Thus Railling, a small weedy youth, who had evidently just left school, and groused bitterly at finding that he had still got to obey orders.

"No, I think he's quite right

there. If men don't obey orders you can't hope to win a war, and if we, who hope to be officers, don't learn obedience, how can we expect our men to? I'm a schoolmaster in private life, and I know what a difference good discipline makes. But I think he does work us too hard sometimes."

At this moment another company passed them, homeward bound, and halted for a few minutes.

"Going home to lunch," queried one of the newcomers, "or going to have your usual bread and cheese in Pinehill Park? You live like a lot of Tommies in your company."

No. 3 platoon looked at him moodily, for the remark rankled, and they felt there was no retort to be made. But when that company moved on again, Meadows remarked to the rest of the platoon—

"They may have lunch at home and 'live like gentlemen,' but it's a pity they can't keep step. Look at that rear section."

The platoon looked at them critically, and Greenway said—

"Yes, it's not exactly beautiful, and look at those rifles all over the place. I'm not sure the captain's not right about the slinging arms all on the same shoulder. We look a sight smarter than they do. I wouldn't mind Lewis on that ground if he didn't worry us so when we're not on drill parades. It's on fatigues and trench work that he gets so d——d riling."

At this moment Lewis blew his whistle, and the company

scrambled to its feet and fell in fairly smartly.

Gamaliel watching them fall in remarked to his sergeant-instructor, "They'll be soldiers yet. They're beginning to smarten."

"Yes, sir, I spoke to them a bit yesterday. They're good lads and keen, but they don't realise quite the amount of work they've got to do. I've seen worse, far worse."

Lewis was holding forth to the company at the end of a very long and weary day in July. They had really done quite well, all things considered. When they marched they marched like men, and when they had to dig they worked like stokers. As Phayle said, "They're beginning to try and think they're soldiers. We'll make men of 'em yet."

"You're a great improvement on what you were two months ago," said Lewis. "I generally make a habit of damning you six days a week, but I don't mind praising you faintly just for once. You've just come back from Aldbury, a shade over five miles, in an hour and twenty minutes in full marching order at the end of a long day. You kept your dressing and your step all the way, and, to tell the truth, you're the nearest thing I've seen to a company of regulars since I left the front. You handle your arms quite creditably, and you're just beginning to take a soldierly pride in yourselves, and in consequence *we* are beginning to take a

pride in you too. Felt quite proud to march at the head of you yesterday. If you go on like this you'll be a company yet. Dismiss!"

Every man turned sharply to his right, slapped the butt of his rifle smartly, halted a moment, and marched off.

As they entered their quarters they found a new draft standing outside. A batch of cadets had just departed on leave pending gazetting, so that Robinson, Greenway, and company found themselves at last in the heights of the company's Olympus, namely, No. 1 platoon. There was a distinct change in their bearing now from the last time we saw them. They carried themselves as behoves men who consider themselves soldiers. They had begun to look askance at units that worked less hard than they did, or spent a fraction of a second longer in changing position on parade. They turned out smartly even on fatigue, and they saluted punctiliously, yet with a certain air as though they were aware of their worth when they did it. In fact they were gradually becoming soldiers, and therefore men. When they got a job of work to do, they did it light-heartedly but thoroughly; they no longer sat about in corners and groused at their servitude. They giped freely at companies or regiments they considered less smart than themselves. They boasted openly of their company, and even occasionally, *mirabile dictu*, in confidential moments admitted that Lewis

was not a bad old stick and meant well. They considered their subalterns as above all other subalterns that had ever been seen among the Angels, and rammed the fact down other cadets' throats. In fact they had established an atmosphere of *esprit de compagnie*, which is the first step towards *esprit de corps*. They considered themselves the best company in the best unit in the best army in the world, and each of them felt that the company's reputation rested on his shoulders.

Observe Robinson and Greenway standing restfully in front of the new draft and criticising aloud.

"Poor lot, Robinson, aren't they? Hardly call 'em soldiers. Look at the fourth man in the front rank. Got his pocket undone. Man in the rear rank got bright buttons too. Wonder what they sent us this mouldy push for."

"I expect the other companies are getting jealous of us, and trying to lower our standard," said Robinson. Then addressing the newcomers: "You'll have to buck up a bit if you want to stop here, you know. We're No. 2, and don't you forget it. I should advise you to smarten up some before Mr Phayle comes along or you'll get your leave stopped for a cert. Can't think why you don't try and look like soldiers when you come here."

"We shall have to look after them a bit," said Greenway, "or else our reputation will go down. They look as if they

didn't like work overmuch either, and we shall have to chivvy them, I can see. Hulloo, there's C Company coming along! We'd better move away, or they'll think this lot belongs to the company if they see us with it."

They walked away towards their quarters.

"Where are you going next week-end?" asked Robinson.

"Don't know quite," said Greenway. "I was going to see my cousins. Your brother's in the same brigade, isn't he? Shall we go down together?"

"Don't think it's a good scheme. I saw my brother's lot last week. Mouldiest crowd you ever set eyes on. No dis-

cipline; every one does what they d——d well like, wear any kit you please, and the slackest lot of officers I ever saw. They never seem to do any work. Rotten crowd."

Just then Lewis came up. The two cadets sprang to attention.

"Looking at the new draft?" said Lewis. "How do they strike you?"

"A very poor lot, sir. We shall have to handle them a good deal yet before they're fit to be in the company."

Lewis looked at the two youths curiously.

"Yes. Handling people does 'em good, doesn't it?"

"GANPAT."

(*To be continued.*)

TWO'S TWO.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

CHAPTER XXIX.—THE ANSWER TO THE TELEGRAM.

FEW hereditary reformers have passed an unhappier night than Samuel spent in the Hostel dedicated to his pious grandfather; and no reformer of any kind has ever refused marmalade next morning with more asperity. His letter to 'The Times' was now six columns long and exceptionally breezy, but even the sublime art of creative literature can pall. As the morning wore on his spirits fell lower and lower, until at last the horrible thought that 'The Times' itself might possibly prove unworthy of his confidence began to poison the very well-springs of hope.

"I almost wish I knew how to be profane!" he said to himself bitterly.

And then, as it was getting on towards noon, came the welcome revelation that true Virtue is never quite forgotten by the Higher Powers. It came in the form of a telegram.

"For you, sir," said Fawkes, whose manner this morning was a blend of sympathy and severity that drove the pillaged Reformer almost frantic. "It'll either be from your doctor or your keeper, I s'pose."

Like a ray of sunshine, this message greeted Samuel—

Going to-day to stop with Mountappleton.

ARCHIBALD.

It had been sent to Major Peckenham's and re-addressed by his late host, evidently after learning of the inquiries made by Mr Spink.

"Is the boy waiting?" inquired Samuel eagerly.

"Bless yer 'eart, sir," said Mr Fawkes benevolently, "we'd do anythink to 'elp your friends to find you! The boy's as hinterested as any of us!"

With a hand that trembled with excitement, Samuel scribbled a reply—

Come instantly Warrington Hostel. In serious trouble.

SAMUEL.

"Very 'andsomely expressed," said Mr Fawkes with approval. "It'll be 'ard to 'and you over to the gent; but what 'as to be, 'as to be."

Samuel made no answer; he was saving it up. The key turned on a very different philosopher. With grim joy he now regarded the ungrateful Warden, the detestable Spink, and even the hated Fawkes, but as destined victims. When he had grasped the hand of Archibald, when the maltreated Reformer was

discovered to be in very truth Sir Wyverne himself, what vengeance then should be exacted!

Though Samuel admitted—nay, boasted—that the vice of imagination had been omitted from his composition, he had just sufficient spark of something faintly resembling it to picture a very satisfactory scene: his persecutors ranged with bowed heads in the dining-hall, the canvas bag on the table, and the voice of the much-wronged baronet denouncing the culprits without mercy or cessation for, say, three consecutive hours. In fact, so clearly did Samuel begin to see this drama that he put the letter to 'The Times' carefully in his pocket, so that in the course of his speech Sir Wyverne might have the opportunity of reading it aloud. (Though, of course, it should subsequently be published.)

And then he waited. And throughout the Hostel, from Warden to porter, they waited too.

It was in the middle of the afternoon that a taxi drew up before the archway that led into the Hostel, and a gentleman alighted. He wore a particularly full and bushy beard and a pair of tinted spectacles—features that suggested considerable maturity; though his slight figure and airy walk made it seem probable that he was a rather younger man than he looked, very likely prematurely aged by his heavy responsibilities.

Fawkes, who had been on

the alert since noon, stepped out of the lodge at once.

"Say, porter!" cried the stranger, "have you gotten a gentleman called Harris stopping here?"

His accent and expressions were strange to East London, and Fawkes took considerable credit to himself for diagnosing them at once as American (as he well might, for they were not exactly the usual language of America; in fact they were very interesting philological variants).

"Yes, sir," said Fawkes promptly. "You the doctor, sir?"

"The doctor?" said the stranger, and it almost seemed for a moment that he was a little surprised—no doubt at Mr Fawkes' acumen.

"Rather, old bird, I'm the doc.!" he added instantly. "How's the patient?"

Fawkes shook his head gravely.

"'E 'ad a bad turn last night, sir. Took to swearin' and cussin' at me and the gentlemen 'ere—somethink awful 'e was! Accusin' me of robbin' 'im of bags of money and I don't know all what!"

"Clean off his onion, eh?" said the doctor, who assumed a more and more sagacious look as the conversation proceeded.

"We didn't 'ave no notion 'e were mad to begin with; but a reg'lar 'owling lunatic 'e become, sir, and no mistake! In fact, sir, we've been expecting you rather anxious like."

"Oh, you've been expecting

me?" said the doctor. "Well, I guess I've come all right! And now, boss, lead me to it!"

Mr Fawkes led him towards the Warden's quarters.

"About that there bag of gold," he said confidentially as they went, "'e's ravin' some-think awful——"

"See here!" interrupted the doctor briskly, "if you've boned his caboodle, I'd advise you to lie low and say nothing. Just help me to get him out and into that derved cab, and I'll wink the other eye. See?"

What Mr Fawkes did actually see is uncertain. He certainly did not look as though he saw an average medical practitioner.

"S'help me——!" he began in an uncertain voice.

"Help yourself, old bird," interrupted the doctor, "but don't bother me about it. Medicine's my line, not crime."

An awed silence fell upon Mr Fawkes. In fact, he afterwards confided to his intimates that he had enjoyed one of the most eye-opening, flooring-with-a-feather experiences of his life.

The Rev. Jocelyn was the next to be impressed by Dr Jeremiah O. K. Whistler (which it seemed was their visitor's typically transatlantic name).

"Shake!" cried Dr Whistler, holding out his hand enthusiastically; "I reckon I know a good man when I see one, and you're the blooming bird twice over!"

"You — er — have come to

recover our unfortunate friend, Mr Harris, I presume?" inquired the Rev. Jocelyn.

"You never spoke a truer word, sir!" cried the doctor, "and I reckon truth and ginger-beer are your specialities. Slick back into his strait-waistcoat he goes, sir!"

As Dr Whistler seemed anxious to take his charge back by a certain train (he omitted, they remembered afterwards, to specify where the asylum stood and from what station it was reached), and as the Warden was equally anxious to terminate his responsibility for Mr Harris, Mr Spink and Mr Jollins and two or three other of the strongest-nerved philanthropists were immediately collected, and with the Warden, Fawkes, and the doctor in the van the party approached Mr Harris's room.

The Reformer, whose window overlooked the courtyard, had observed a certain air of bustle and the presence of an energetic-looking stranger, but as he failed to see any sign of Archibald, his philosophy was again becoming strained. He was endeavouring to console himself by forecasting heavier penalties for the delinquents the longer his imprisonment lasted, and planning a very severe article for the 'Fort-nightly,' when he heard the key turn for the last time in his lock.

Assuming his most astringent air, he confronted the intruders. They were headed, he noticed, by the same energetic-looking stranger, and be-

fore he had time to demand the reason of the disturbance this gentleman addressed him with the remarkable words—

"Say, boss, your little picnic has run dry! Back to chewing straws is the programme now, Harris. Here are your boots! Hustle now—get a move on!"

"Who is this person?" demanded Samuel sternly.

"Holy Jehosaphat, he pretends not to know the doc.!" exclaimed Dr Whistler.

"Perhaps his memory is a little weak," suggested Mr Jollins (a gentleman whose suggestions were always considered valuable).

"Jolly's got it in one!" cried the doctor rapturously. "Sakes alive, this place is fairly crawling with brains! Memory gone—that's the derved solution!"

"This is the doctor of the Asylum what you comed from," explained Mr Fawkes, who believed in making things clear. "Now stick up yer foot and I'll put on yer boot."

Samuel maintained an attitude of wary hostility, his feet tucked well under his chair.

"I sent a telegram to Mr Fitz-Wyverne—," he began.

"And Fitz wired right straight to the Asylum," cried Dr Whistler, "just like the sport he is. And down I came by the first train."

"Then Mr Fitz-Wyverne has actually sent you?" demanded Samuel.

"Sure!" said Dr Whistler.

Samuel began to waver.

The proceedings were somewhat difficult to follow, but then Archibald's proceedings generally were. On the whole, he decided that Dr Whistler's company was preferable to the philanthropists.

"You can put on my boots," he said.

A few minutes later the Warden and a select party of philanthropists were escorting their visitors across the quadrangle, Fawkes marching in front with the suit-case. Suddenly Samuel stopped.

"My bag of money!" he exclaimed. "I demand that back!"

"That's all right, boss," said Dr Whistler soothingly. "I've got it safe for you."

The wink which he shot at Fawkes nearly gave the finishing touch to the ex-Bruiser's emotions. The actual touch was given a moment later when the genial doctor whispered in his ear—

"Put it in a pub—they pay like Billy O!"

Samuel and the suit-case entered the taxi, and the doctor bade the philanthropists a cordial farewell.

"See here, boys," said he, "if ever you start a crack in the top storey—which, mind you, is a thing that may happen to the noisiest sportsman any day, especially considering the rate you live at, etcetera,—well, just you send for me! So long! Be good! Till we meet again!"

But it was the unfortunate fate of Warrington Hostel never again to meet Dr Jeremiah O. K. Whistler.

CHAPTER XXX.—IN THE CAB.

"Guess I've diddled 'em some!" said Dr Whistler complacently as the taxi sped westwards.

Samuel edged into his corner, turned sideways, and looked his rescuer up and down very carefully and very critically. And the more carefully he looked, the more unfavourably was he impressed. In fact, the beard and spectacles struck him as the only respectable features in an otherwise deboshed individual.

"Let me tell you," said Samuel severely, "that you have taken an unwarranted liberty with my person."

"Well, boss," replied the doctor cheerfully, "I'll take you back to those giddy birds if you prefer it. Personally, it struck me they'd be the better of a wash, shave, brush up, having their trousers ironed and rendezvousing with a few more Society Duchesses, etcetera, etcetera; but of course there's no accounting for tastes. I daresay seeing 'em all together in one cage accentuates the impression of hairiness; still, if you like that sort of atmosphere, say the word, cocky, and back you goes."

Samuel was conscious of a vague impression that the doctor's manner of speech had altered somewhat in the course of these remarks. It seemed a little less foreign; it even had a half-familiar sound. But the grave intellect of Samuel took no stock in such superficial details. It concen-

trated on the essentials, and in a very serious voice he replied—

"I regard your strictures as merely frivolous; but at the same time I do not wish to return to the Hostel till I have met Mr Fitz-Wyverne. I presume you are taking me to meet him?"

"I reckon you can't come nearer meeting Fitz than by keeping right along with me," said the doctor confidently.

For a few minutes Samuel was silent, while the doctor whistled. Apparently the Reformer's mind was endeavouring to grapple with the extraordinary problem of Dr Whistler's appearance in response to a telegram sent to Archibald, for his next remark was—

"I do not understand Mr Fitz-Wyverne's behaviour in the least. Why did he send you instead of coming himself in response to my specific request? I am extremely displeased with him."

"Well, boss, I reckon it was like this," said Dr Whistler (who seemed to have a curious habit of revealing his transatlantic origin at the beginning of his speeches and disguising it before the end), "Fitz said to me, 'Doc., old bird, there's a pal of mine gotten into a scrape. He's always in trouble; and whether it's a girl this time, or an overdose of old Scotch and a three round catch-as-you-can with the boys in blue, dash me if I

know!' says Fitz. 'Anyhow, it's something that won't do my reputation any good if I get mixed up in it, so just you out along and bail the blighter out for me.' Well, old bird, it was asking a good deal of a busy man, but Fitz is a true sport, and I've got a kind of way with me. A man's got to be a pretty bad hat if I can't soften his heart and lead him back to the paths of virtue, etcetera. 'I'll bring him back sober if I have to make him swallow a quart of mustard!' says I; 'and as for a girl, well, if he hasn't married her, I'll get him home somehow, even if I have to make him drunk again to do it!' 'Drunk or sober,' says Fitz, 'bring back old Sam Harris. His weaknesses are more his misfortune than his fault. All heart and no head is Sam, that's what gets him into mischief!'"

With paper at its present price, it is quite impossible to do justice to the Reformer's emotions during this summary of Mr Fitz-Wyverne's conversation, or to report adequately his speech in reply. It was very long, very explicit in its denials of each insinuation (which it covered severally and collectively), and remarkably acrimonious in tone. In fact the only criticism that could be made was that somehow or other its purport seemed to be misapprehended by the doctor, for at the conclusion he merely remarked—

"Well, old bird, that's fairly incriminating, but I won't give the show away. Habits are dashed difficult to cure, I

know, but stick to it, boss, and you'll pull through!"

In the meanwhile their taxi had pushed its way through the City, crossed London Bridge, and spun through a number of South London highways, without the Reformer even observing in what direction he was being conducted. Now it suddenly pulled up beside the pavement, and on looking out of the window he discovered they were opposite the foot of the stairs leading up to Vauxhall Bridge Station.

"Where are you taking me to?" he demanded.

There was no answer, and turning his head, Samuel found to his consternation that Dr Whistler had vanished—into space he thought at first. Then just as it was beginning to dawn upon his capacious intellect that the doctor had slipped out of the cab on the far side while he was reading the name of the station, he heard a familiar voice address him from the pavement.

"Samuel, old bird!"

The Reformer turned with a start, and beheld the smiling face of Archibald.

"Souvenirs!" added Archie, pitching the beard and spectacles of Dr Jeremiah O. K. Whistler into the cab.

To describe Samuel as shocked by the gross deception practised upon him, would be putting it very mildly indeed.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded in his most formidable accents.

"The meaning is," said Archibald, in rather a wary

voice and with one eye on the back of the driver, "that I didn't know what kind of a silly mess you'd got yourself into, so I thought a bit of disguise would do no harm. You're the sort of sportsman who might have an outbreak of any kind of new vice. Besides, I rather suspected you'd want to shake hands and end the fun."

"I certainly do propose to end this detestable business!" cried Samuel warmly, seizing the handle of the door.

"Steady, old cockalorum!" said Archibald, holding the handle on the outside. "It takes two to do that, and I'm having a ripping time! I only just want to have you on tap in case the police nail me. Wire me your new address as soon as you've got one! I must be off now!"

"Where are you going?" cried Samuel wildly.

"To catch a train. Waterloo being a little too public, I've had to come and catch it here, and I've cut myself fine for time." He glanced at his wristlet watch (price fifteen guineas—a recent purchase)

and exclaimed, "Good Lord, I must bolt! Keep virtuous!"

"My bag of money!" screamed Samuel.

"Haven't got it!" cried Archibald over his shoulder. "Go on tick—use my name as reference!"

And the next instant he was across the pavement and tearing up the steps, while an exceptionally indignant philosopher was wrenching the door open.

Samuel was not perhaps the typical man of action, but even a thinker when roused can exhibit remarkable energy. He dashed across the pavement, and had almost put his foot on the steps when he was arrested by a loud and menacing cry of—

"Hi! who's goin' to pay for this keb?"

For a moment Samuel hesitated, and in that moment the cabman descended on to the pavement too. He was a sturdy and somewhat truculent-looking person, the Reformer observed. And then occurred the only lapse in a career of otherwise unblemished virtue.

"Damn!" said Samuel.

CHAPTER XXXI.—SAMUEL'S ADVENTURE.

By the time Samuel had finished one hotly-conducted debate with the cabman regarding the reliability of the machinery for registering twopences, and another with a railway official who insisted on his purchasing a ticket before rushing on to the platform, Archibald's train

had been gone for some minutes.

But the Reformer did not leave the station. He purchased a ticket (counting his change very carefully), ate a bun and drank a glass of milk at the buffet, and then for a couple of hours or so paced the platform in the thickening

dusk, inquiring the destination of every train as it came in, and cross-examining the porters severely to test the accuracy of their statements. Finally, he mounted into a third-class carriage, remarked with considerable asperity to a fellow-passenger that he strongly suspected *somebody* had been smoking in this compartment, and thereafter gazed sombrely out of the window at the flitting lights.

It was rather more than an hour later that an exceedingly determined-looking gentleman, wearing a Shetland wool waistcoat and carrying a waterproof, alighted at a certain station in Surrey and proceeded to make the most minute inquiries concerning the way to Lord Mountapleton's residence. It took some considerable time to satisfy him that he was neither being deceived intentionally nor misled accidentally; and finally, with a word of warning to his informants to be more explicit in future, he tramped off into the dark.

The night was quite fallen now, and only a stray star or two shone through drifting clouds to light the way, but like a needle leaping to the magnet, Samuel strode straight for his goal. He followed each direction minutely and conscientiously (though always with a bitter suspicion he had been trifled with), till at length he recognised the stately entrance to the Marquis of Mountapleton's demesne.

The gates stood open, a small fact whose coming importance

the philosopher little suspected; and up the pitch-black avenue he stalked with a mind beginning to feel more reassured. He had not been deceived after all—a pleasant surprise to a thorough Reformer. And then the lights of the house began to twinkle and Samuel to reflect on a new difficulty.

How should he effect an entrance? So superior was Samuel's mind to the plain matter-of-fact variety, that this problem had not occurred to him before. But he now began to think very strenuously indeed. If he simply rang and asked for Mr Fitz-Wyverne, Mr Fitz-Wyverne would certainly decline to meet him. If he asked for Lord Mountapleton, what should he say that would be believed? And then Fate, who had been so unkind, suddenly changed her tactics and presented him with a solution.

As he was standing in the black shade of the tree nearest to the house, debating the question, the front door opened and first a dog and then a man appeared. The dog (her ladyship's pet poodle) luckily scampered in the opposite direction. The man (his lordship's butler) strolled whistling after the dog. A minute later Samuel had slipped through the open door and was heading straight for his bedroom.

He took it for granted it was his, because Sir Wyverne always occupied that room, and Samuel was incapable of imagining himself in any other chamber. The tide of fortune still flowed with him. He met

not a soul; the door did not even need to be opened, and within another minute Samuel was in the wardrobe.

The light in the room was turned low and inside the wardrobe it was very dark indeed, even though he kept the door a chink open, and in such circumstances it is not surprising that the philosopher again began to be visited by disquieting thoughts.

Suppose Archibald rejected the proffered hand? Suppose he even used violence to escape Samuel's grip? What could be done? A hand was a very small thing to seize hold of!

And then he had one of the most wonderful inspirations that ever visited a teetotaller. Out of the wardrobe he hopped, and in three minutes was back again—ready. And scarcely was he safely back before he heard a footstep.

Nearer and louder came the step, the door opened, the light was turned up, and Samuel was on the point of throwing open the wardrobe door when the stranger passed the chink. And, in fact, it was a stranger. Samuel only caught a glimpse of his back, but certainly it was not the back of Archibald. Presently the light was turned down and the gentleman went out again.

The inspired philosopher was dumfounded. He was in the

wrong room! For a moment he almost gave up his project in despair, and then a second almost equally brilliant inspiration visited him. In a flash he remembered that he actually *had* once stayed in another bedroom, and he knew where it was too—across the passage a little to the right. As it was quite impossible for him to imagine a part of Sir Wyverne being housed anywhere except in the rooms which had housed the complete baronet, this happy recollection seemed to him decisive.

He hopped out of the wardrobe again, tiptoed to the door, and seeing the passage quite empty and silent, scuttled for the other bedroom. Again luck was with him. The door stood open, and this time there was a fire which took the chill off the air very gratefully. It had recently been piled with small coal and for the moment gave little illumination, and as the gas jet was turned very low, the room was pretty dark.

"All the better for my purpose!" thought Samuel.

This wardrobe seemed rather too full of hanging garments of some kind, so he planted himself behind what appeared to be a dressing-gown suspended from a hook on a door. And there he waited.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE MYSTERY AT LORD MOUNTAPPLETON'S.

Archibald got back shortly before dinner, and he had hardly been in his room five minutes before his fellow-adventurer entered with an air of mingled relief and indignation.

"Thank God you are back!" he exclaimed. "I began to think you had given me the slip!"

"My dear old chap, I'm awful sorry," said Archie cheerfully, "but really you needn't have worried. You don't suppose I'd hook it in the very middle of such a run of luck?"

"Run of luck!" said Swinby. "You're dashed easy satisfied, let me tell you!"

Archibald looked surprised.

"We've got a ripping car," said he, "and a few quids left, and the police haven't nailed us yet, and this is a jolly comfortable house, and I can get any number of other introductions out of my cousin. In fact I've just thought of a brilliant scheme to get him to introduce us to some tailors. If we can once secure evening clothes again, I'd like you to tell me what else a good sportsman wants!"

"I can tell you what one sportsman wants," said Swinby with feeling, "and that is to get out of this house! It's all very well for you spending the day in town, but I've been having the nastiest time of my life."

"As far as I remember, old Mountappleton's port is rather wash," admitted Archibald.

"It isn't his port, it's his sister! I fell into the hands of Lady Ellvin after lunch."

"I warned you Elizabeth was a man-eater," said Archibald.

"A fat lot of good it was warning me when I was in the same cage with her and

couldn't get out! She asked me if I was Jack Swinby of the 35th!"

"Well, you'd only got to lie."

"I did lie, but I'm quite certain she doesn't believe me. She had a nephew in the same beastly regiment, and she's told the others all about my distinguished career. If they discover I'm really the same man, they'll kick us both out, I'm absolutely positive."

"I can't think what makes people so censorious," said Archibald. "As long as you don't stick umbrellas into their eyes and interrupt them when they're saying grace and aren't always drunk, why trouble about your past life? If I ever write a book it'll be called 'Drunkenness as a Health-cure, or Why not Live in Jail?' I say, suppose we write it together and begin to-morrow! We might make a pot of money and do a trip to Monte Carlo. What ho?"

"In the meantime," said the Captain without enthusiasm, "the question is, how to keep that woman quiet?"

"Leave her to me," said Archibald confidently. "I've really got rather a gift for keeping people off serious subjects."

The spurious Captain Swinby ever afterwards recalled his dinner at Lord Mountappleton's as the least enjoyable episode of his career. He found himself actually sitting next to Lady Ellvin, and the record of the real Lieutenant Swinby, late of the 35th Hussars,

seemed to be the only subject which interested her at present.

She was a large woman with a cold eye, a fluent tongue, and the highest moral standards conceivable. In vain Archibald showered his happiest conversational gems at her across the table. She merely stared at him and resumed her inquisition.

"Pardon my saying so, but you don't lie well, old bird," said Archibald confidentially when the ladies had left the room.

"I did get a bit mixed up," the Captain confessed lugubriously.

As their host was no smoker, the guests were conducted to the drawing-room after merely the briefest of respites. It was far too short for Captain Swinby.

"I can't face her again just yet!" he whispered desperately, and with a mumbled excuse about a handkerchief hurried towards his room.

With this slight incident began that strange and inexplicable series of events which, in the deliberate opinion of the Marquis of Mountappleton (a nobleman of wide experience), formed one of the most mysterious episodes on authentic record.

His lordship himself always attached considerable importance to this preliminary visit of Captain Swinby to his bedroom. Certain stories told by the servants of their seeing the Captain disconsolately wandering through the house with a harassed expression,

might or might not be significant, he thought, but Swinby's own story (narrated later in the evening) he considered highly suggestive. While in his bedroom, the Captain reported, he heard something which sounded like a movement in the wardrobe, and had almost opened the wardrobe door in consequence, but as the sound ceased, he concluded it was only his disturbed nerves, and went to the drawing-room without making any investigation. A certain fact discovered later undoubtedly supported his lordship's view of the significance of this incident.

Thereafter for nearly half an hour the party in the drawing-room conducted themselves much as parties in drawing-rooms generally conduct themselves. Then Lady Ellvin rose and left the room, and immediately after she had gone, Captain Swinby, with whom she had been conversing, came hurriedly to his friend Mr Fitz-Wyverne, and they talked for a moment apart.

The nature of their conversation was not, however, discovered by their host, though even if it had been he might have found it a little difficult to see in it any clue.

"The d——d woman has just remembered she has an old group of fellows in her nephew's regiment with me in it!" whispered Swinby.

"I'll stop her, old bird!" said Archibald.

The next incident (trivial apparently, but momentous as it turned out) was the imme-

diate departure from the room of Mr Fitz-Wyverne. That this talented gentleman had some ingenious scheme may perhaps be assumed, but events intervened. He had just entered the passage which led to her ladyship's room when he was startled by a loud scream, followed immediately by the appearance of Lady Ellvin herself in a state of agitation bordering on terror.

"Help! help!" she screamed. "There's a naked man in my bedroom!"

"Quite naked?" inquired Archibald, catching the lady in his arms (very soothingly, she afterwards admitted).

"Quite! Absolutely!" she gasped.

"What a shocking affair!" said Archibald sympathetically. "Lean against the wall, old girl, while I go and cover him up."

Lady Ellvin's sworn and reiterated statement is that she distinctly saw her rescuer hurry down the passage and turn into her bedroom; that there was then a muffled cry and a brief sound as of a scuffle, and that a moment later the door banged, and she heard the key turn in the lock.

Thereat the alarmed lady fled back to the drawing-room, where her broken words brought the gentlemen of the party to her bedroom door at a run.

And then the mystery rapidly thickened. The door stood locked, and knock or shout as they liked, they got no word of answer. But every now and then between the knocks they were quite sure that they heard distinct but very stealthy sounds, as of some one moving guardedly about that hitherto inviolate apartment.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—THE HEEL-MARKS.

What happened within the room only one man and those few whom he subsequently entrusted with his sacred confidence, have ever known.

For a moment two men knew. Crying "Hi! you improper fellow there!" Archibald charged straight at a dim pink figure lurking in the shadows. Simultaneously the figure sprang to meet him; he seized its naked arms—and inside of a second later Sir Wyverne Warrington-Browne alone occupied the room.

Any baronet who has ever found himself, late in the even-

ing and attired only in his boots, in a lady's bedroom in a friend's country house, without either the knowledge of the lady or the invitation of his friend, will thoroughly sympathise with Sir Wyverne's predicament. And if to these embarrassing circumstances be added the facts that he had not the faintest intention of being there or made any preparations for leaving, that his clothes were all in another bedroom and that there was no time to go and get them, and that even the boots (which had been purchased by practically

another gentleman) were distinctly tight, mere sympathy will seem almost inadequate.

Though no prude, Sir Wyverne had always been decent to the verge of modesty, and his first instinct (which did him great credit) was to leap to the door and lock it; and only then did he turn to the problem of sheltering himself against the rigours of an autumn evening. Unfortunately his very anxiety made him overshoot the mark, for when he stretched an agitated hand to turn up the gas, out went the flame instead. With frenzied vigour the unhappy baronet next stoked the fire, with the result that the covering of dross collapsed and almost put it out. And at that moment the cries and knockings on the door began.

In almost total darkness, Sir Wyverne groped along the floor till he found the cast-off garments of the vanished Archibald, and desperately thrust one leg into the arm of the under-vest. By the time he extracted it again little seemed to remain but buttons. Another powerful leg-drive dislocated the trousers of the slender youth, and giving up this solution in despair, the baronet opened Lady Ellvin's drawers in succession and gradually covered himself with something—though what precisely the ingredients were he dared not even guess.

Then, with several novel sensations as he moved, he sought for the waterproof which had been Samuel's only shelter when he left Captain

Swinby's bedroom. What he succeeded in finding was certainly not a waterproof, but time seemed too precious to waste in finishing touches. He gently opened the window, discovered a tolerably practicable pipe within reach, and after shinning down for a few yards, dropped into a flower-bed, scathed though not seriously.

He always maintained afterwards that only a professional criminal of the widest experience could reasonably have been expected to devise a better programme on the spur of the moment than he did. To leave as few incriminating footprints as possible—that was his sole thought in the palpitating minutes that elapsed between his descent from the window and the raising of the hue and cry. This end he endeavoured to achieve by a series of prodigious leaps. It is true that each time he descended the heels of Samuel's boots were driven inches deep into the turf, while Lady Ellvin's under-garments yielded several times to the strain; still, the method ensured a succession of gaps in his spoor which unquestionably puzzled the local constabulary next morning. And thus progressing, he headed for the garden wall; his verdict on the late Samuel's intelligence becoming more emphatic with every bound.

In the meanwhile the chain of events, as subsequently pieced together by Lord Mount-appleton, was developing rapidly.

"Listen! I'm certain I heard

the window being opened!" exclaimed his lordship.

His fellow-knockers ceased rapping and listened breathlessly.

"There's a draught blowin' through the key'ole, my lord!" cried an exceptionally intelligent young footman, blinking his eye; "the window must be open!"

Instantly the order was given to secure lights and search the gardens and park. The gentlemen ran to their rooms to get into their boots, and it was then that Captain Swinby made the next discovery. On the floor in one corner he discovered nothing less extraordinary than a man's complete outfit—suit of tweeds, shirt, under-garments; everything, in fact, except his boots.

This was admitted by all to account very naturally for the nakedness of the mysterious intruder; and in fact it was considered so encouraging a clue that even the elderly Marquis dashed into the shrubbery like a schoolboy, while the intelligent young footman had seen three glimpses of masked figures gliding among the trees in as many minutes.

The only one of the party who seemed a little lacking in dash was, curiously enough, the ex-hussar. His proceedings were cautious, and in some respects peculiar. Waiting till the tide had flowed out into the grounds, he accosted a thrilled housemaid, borrowed from her a stout hairpin, and quietly returned to Lady Ellvin's bedroom door, where in a few minutes

his skilful fingers had turned the key from the outside.

Thereupon he entered and carefully examined that chamber of mystery; and the double discovery that Archibald was not there, but that his clothes were, disquieted the Captain exceedingly.

"He has hooked it after all!" he muttered. "But what the devil——?"

He shook his head for a few moments over the problem of the clothes, and then hurried back to his own room and immediately packed his suitcase. With that in one hand and an electric torch in the other, he slipped unostentatiously out into the garden and began by examining the ground under Lady Ellvin's window. He next swept his torch over the grass, and was quickly rewarded by the discovery of two deep heel-marks. Following the direction in which the toes were pointing, he soon discovered another pair of indentations, and presently a third.

"It looks like a dashed kangaroo!" he murmured.

Guided by the heel-marks, and crying every now and then in a guarded voice, "Archie, old chap!" the Captain found himself at last confronted by an immensely large cypress with an ivy-covered wall behind it. He had evidently reached the limits of the garden, and for a minute he hesitated.

"Archie, old chap!" he cried once more, though with a diminishing hope of getting an answer.

"Swinby!" replied a voice which, though vaguely familiar, was certainly not Archibald's.

It seemed to come from above him and from behind the cypress. Stepping round the tree and flashing his torch upwards, he perceived, upon its hands and knees on the top of the wall, a crouching figure in a very tastefully frilled dressing-gown of a rich crimson hue.

"I say, Swinby!" said the figure.

Captain Swinby started so violently that he nearly dropped his torch.

"Warrington-Browne!" he gasped.

"Hush!" whispered the baronet. "Don't talk so loud! I say, Swinby, I'm in rather an awkward predicament."

"You—er—do rather look like it," admitted Swinby.

"And so are you," added the baronet.

"Well," said the Captain cautiously, "I don't know that I'm exactly in clover—but anyhow I'm not in Lady Ellvin's dressing-gown."

"Look here, old fellow," said Sir Wyverne in his most insinuating voice, "the best thing is for us to bolt together!"

It took the ex-hussar barely a couple of seconds to weigh this proposal. The deliverance of a wealthy baronet from a situation so delicate that no return the baronet could ever make would really be adequate, under circumstances that must for ever be kept a secret, seemed to him one of those

rare propositions which have no disadvantages whatever.

"Right you are, old chap," said he; "how shall we manage it?"

"Can you drive a car?" asked the baronet eagerly.

"I'm not a fancy driver," admitted Swinby, "but I can start that thing of Fitz-Wyverne's, and I think I can stop it again."

"Well then, get it out of the garage, and bring it round to the other side of this wall. There's a drive of sorts over here. But be sure you stop at the right place!"

"But, I say," exclaimed Swinby, "won't Archie have taken it off with him?"

"Archie be damned!" replied the baronet, a little impatiently it seemed. "I know he hasn't taken it! Off you get as quick as you can—and by the way, get hold of a motor-coat for me, a good warm one!"

"But—er—whose?"

"Oh, any one you can see—Mountappleton's for choice; it's fur-lined. But do hurry up, Swinby. It's a bit chilly up here."

"Warrington-Browne in a stolen dressing-gown, going off in a stolen fur coat and a stolen motor-car!" said Swinby to himself as he hurried cautiously through the garden. "He takes after his cousin Archie more than I imagined. Only, thank God, old Warrington-Browne's not the man to lose his cheque-book! I say, what a bit of luck for me if I bring this off!"

It was about quarter of an hour later that Lord Mount-appleton, just returned from a somewhat exhausting hunt through the park, was startled by another disquieting piece of news. Captain Swinby, it seemed, had appeared at the garage, insisted on taking out the car in which he and Mr Fitz-Wyverne had arrived, and driven off with it into the night. As he had taken with him not only his suit-case but a fur-lined motor-coat which the chauffeur thought at the time he recognised and subsequently discovered to be actually his lordship's, the affair seemed to require investigation.

"That's three men who have bolted from this house tonight!" exclaimed the astounded Marquis.

He had hardly spoken before the intelligent footman appeared with yet another remarkable item. He, it appeared, had paused at the garage to exchange views with the chauffeur and had seen the departure of Captain Swinby, but being a very zealous youth, he had not left it at

that. He averred that he started to follow the car, and after running but a few paces, he noticed that instead of going down the main avenue, it turned off the drive that passed under the wall of the gardens. Thereupon he had set out to chase it in earnest, and in the course of another hundred yards had come upon it standing beneath the wall.

"And the Capting was 'elping a man down from the wall, my lord—a man in a long red coat! So off I runs, my lord, to tell your lordship!"

"That's four men bolted!" cried his lordship. "By Gad, but if they're up that drive we may catch them yet! Take two or three men with you, Williams, and after them in the fastest car we've got!"

The chauffeur and the zealous footman vanished at a run, and his lordship fell back in his chair.

"See that as few other people disappear from this house as possible," he commanded; "I shall soon get positively weary of counting them."

CHAPTER XXXIV.—ACROSS COUNTRY.

"There's a car coming after us!" exclaimed Swinby.

"Are you sure?" asked the baronet, swinging the Rolls-Royce straight for the lodge gates.

Swinby leant outwards and looked back.

"Quite—and they're driving like the mischief!" he said.

"Confound it!" murmured the baronet.

"Suppose the gates are shut!" exclaimed Swinby.

"Dash!" muttered the baronet.

"By Gad, they're open!"

"Thank Heaven!" cried the baronet.

They shot through the gates and turned to the left.

"Do you know the road?" asked Swinby.

"I must trust mostly to luck," said Sir Wyverne; "but if our petrol holds out, I ought to find my way in the course of the night."

"Where are you heading for?"

"Home, by George!" said Sir Wyverne fervently; "if you were wearing Lady Ellvin's combinations you wouldn't need to ask!"

Captain Swinby smiled. He had always heard that Sutherbury Park was a highly desirable residence.

For a time they raced through the night in silence, the lights of the other car sometimes falling back, sometimes drawing nearer.

"We've got the legs of him," said Sir Wyverne, "but I wish we could shake him off altogether. Things might be difficult to explain if——"

He fell into meditation without finishing his sentence.

"Things *are* difficult to explain," remarked his fellow-fugitive; "that's to say, a little difficult—in places."

"Swinby," said the baronet earnestly, "you have done me a very great service, and you can rest assured you won't suffer by it. If you want to increase my obligations——"

"Rather, old chap, I do!" the Captain hastened to assure him.

"Well then, there are one or two facts I wish you would——er——"

"Sink," suggested Swinby; "I know what you mean."

"Exactly," said Sir Wyverne. "For instance——"

"The dressing-gown," suggested Swinby helpfully.

"Yes, and——"

"The top of the wall."

"Precisely; also——"

"Mountappleton's fur coat."

"Quite so; in fact one may even add——"

"You're being here at all!" exclaimed Swinby. "It isn't you, it's Archie driving this car! If you nip into the house the instant we arrive, I'll face the music and explain."

"You're a very good fellow—and most resourceful," said the baronet gratefully.

"To tell you the truth," confessed Swinby, "I've really acquired my resourcefulness from your cousin Archie. He has a perfect genius for crime! You don't mind my saying so of a relation, do you?"

"Er—no," said the baronet, "n-not at all."

The report brought back to the Marquis of Mountappleton by his retainers seemed to his lordship to be on the whole thoroughly unsatisfactory. It appeared that by prodigious exertions they managed to keep the Rolls-Royce in view while it described a series of parabolas through the surrounding country. Finally, it seemed to make up its mind which way it wanted to go, and a stiff chase of fifty miles or so in a north-westerly direction brought them about 3 A.M. into the silent streets of the town of Sutherbury.

There they lost their quarry for a few minutes, but on making a cast round the outskirts of the borough, picked it up again just as it had passed through the gates of Sutherland Park. The gates having been closed behind it, there was another brief delay, and then up the avenue they tore, to find the runaways actually standing before Sir Wyverne's door. At least, the car and Captain Swinby were standing there, and the Captain seeing he had to deal only with menials, gave them a very brief and somewhat high-handed account of the escapade.

His companion, he said, had only been Mr Fitz-Wyverne, who had developed a sharp attack of neuralgia, and feeling himself no longer fit company for strangers, had hastened to rest his aching head in his cousin's house. As for the naked man and the person in red on the top of the wall, these were merely figments of Lady Ellvin's and the footman's fancies, and what the devil were they making such a fuss about, said the Captain.

The retainers stated that they would certainly never have been content to accept

this version, especially as it made no reference to the purloined fur coat, had not Sir Wyverne himself appeared at the door with the coat over his arm, and assured them that Captain Swinby's statements were correct. He returned the coat with many apologies for his cousin's action in borrowing it (which he would never have done but for his neuralgia), and bade them a courteous good-night, whereupon there seemed nothing for it but going home again.

"Warrington-Browne squared the brutes, I'm certain!" his lordship declared emphatically to his sister. "Never again does that man, or any of his infernal friends, enter this house! And what's more, I'll write him a devilish sharp note, and tell him so!"

Lady Ellvin believed in people carrying out their good resolutions. In the morning she reminded her brother of his as soon as she met him.

"You haven't forgotten to write to Sir Wyverne—very strongly—I hope?" said she.

Lord Mountappleton smiled grimly.

"I have done something considerably more effective," he replied significantly.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE ONLY EXPLANATION.

Joyce Demayne had finished a lonely breakfast, and was meditating rather sombrely. She had been in her lodgings for a couple of days with nothing to do but to think, and the oftener she went over

her recent adventures the less translucent seemed the conduct of a hitherto valued and respected friend. In fact, the harder she tried to discover one single incident consistent with the far-fetched hypothesis

that he was an innocent, honourable, and truthful gentleman, the more sombre her thoughts became.

The stair creaked under a manly step, there was a rap on the door, and in walked Major Peckenham with a more cheerful expression than his face had worn for days.

"Wyverne's back!" he announced.

"Back! This morning?"

The Major was pleased to notice that her colour rose a little.

"Well," said he, "he has just sent Bilson down with a note, and apparently he arrived in the small hours of the morning."

"Not by train, then?"

"N-no," said the Major with a little hesitation.

"Do you mean that he actually walked back again from Paris?" she asked in a voice that seemed to him a little critical.

"Oh no; he came by car, of course!"

"Why 'of course'? I didn't know he had taken a car."

"It wasn't his own," explained the Major; "at least it wasn't, according to Bilson."

"Do you mind telling me what else Bilson said?" she inquired gently but searchingly.

"Well," said the Major a little uncomfortably, "it's probably an absolute fable, but his account is that Wyverne arrived in a strange car, accompanied by a strange gentleman, and pursued by another car."

"How very romantic!" ex-

claimed Joyce brightly. "Do tell me some more particulars."

"The other particulars are—er—really quite ridiculous."

"Still, I should like to hear them," said Joyce persuasively.

The Major hesitated.

"I suppose you will hear them from some one else," he admitted, "so I may as well mention the rubbish now. There are merely some improbable details about a lady's dressing-gown, and—er—certain under-garments and so on, but—er—absolute nonsense, of course!"

"Of course!" agreed Joyce. "Sir Wyverne's conduct lately has been so remarkably conventional that one can't imagine him doing anything out of the way, can one?"

For a moment Major Peckenham seemed to find a little difficulty in answering. Then he said earnestly—

"I do hope, Miss Demayne, you won't take all this gossip seriously. I have known Wyverne from his school-days, and he is really one of the best fellows breathing. He wants you to go back. In fact, that's really why I'm here. Wyverne's note was simply to tell me to make his apologies till he can make them himself, and see that you packed your things and came back. The car is waiting for you."

"Perhaps," said Joyce after a moment's pause, "I had better go up to the Park and see Sir Wyverne. In fact, as I am still in his employment,

he has a right to order me——”

“It wasn’t an order; merely a most — er — apologetic request!” interrupted the Major.

“But I certainly shan’t pack my things,” concluded Joyce. “If you wait one moment I’ll get on my hat.”

She left the Major shaking his head gravely.

“It’s Wyverne’s own dashed fault!” he said to himself. “And such a fine girl, too,—I hope to Heaven he doesn’t lose her!”

She returned in a most attractive hat—quite her most fetching, he thought, and he assisted her into the car.

“Aren’t you coming with me?” she asked.

“No,” said he; “Wyverne wants only to see you this morning. I hope to see him later, but my business can wait. There’s absolutely no hurry.”

In fact, the more the gallant Major reflected on the way he had done his duty, the less hurry there seemed to be.

The first thing that met Joyce’s eyes when Horrocks threw the front door open was a large brown trunk on which was inscribed in white letters “Lady Warrington-Browne.” If it had been intended to catch her eye, it could not have been better placed, and instinctively she asked—

“Is Lady Warrington-Browne going away?”

“Her ladyship wishes to see you for a moment immediately on your arrival,” replied Horrocks.

He led her to the morning-

room, and there she found her ladyship seated, dressed ready for going out. The dowager only waited till the door was closed and then said in her driest voice—

“I have informed my son that if you return to this house, I shall leave it instantly. That is all.”

“Thank you very much for telling me,” said Joyce pleasantly, and she rejoined Horrocks in the hall.

He led her next to the baronet’s study, threw open the door and announced her, and then as he made his way back, smiled inscrutably.

Joyce found Sir Wyverne seated at his writing-desk. Beside him lay three letters already written. One was addressed to the Marquis of Mountappleton, another to the Manager of the Hotel Chic, and the third to the Warden of Warrington Hostel; while on the baronet’s face was that expression which an experienced literary man would at once recognise as characteristic of the essayist who has just accomplished an exceedingly difficult and delicate piece of composition.

He seemed about to greet his visitor very warmly indeed, but her attitude appeared to check him. Yet his smile remained very engaging and cordial.

“I must begin by apologising most humbly for the way you’ve been treated,” he said.

“It wasn’t your fault,” she assured him.

“Still,” he said earnestly, “I hope you will let me

take the blame and make the reparation."

"It is very good of you to wish to."

Wyverne looked a little nonplussed.

"I'm afraid you don't find it easy to forgive me; but I do hope you won't let anything that has happened stand in the way of our—er—resuming—well, being just as we were before."

"So many things have happened," said Joyce. "I had better tell you about them first, and then you can judge for yourself whether—well, whether what you suggest is possible."

Sir Wyverne endeavoured to look like a man who was about to hear entirely fresh and interesting news.

"When you disappeared——" began Joyce.

"Disappeared!" protested the baronet. "You mean when I went to—er—well, went away."

"I mean when you started to walk to Paris at midnight carrying your luggage and leaving me to break the news," said Joyce, smiling very nicely, but rather coldly, he thought. "Two mornings later I got a letter in your handwriting and signed by you, telling me to come up to town that afternoon and meet you at the Hotel Chic. There was absolutely nothing to make me feel suspicious——"

At this point Sir Wyverne, who had very rapidly found his part of interested audience too difficult to play, interrupted impetuously.

"I know all about it!" he exclaimed—"in fact I know every detail of everything that passed at the Chic, and I assure you you needn't worry over the ridiculous episode any more. Archibald made a perfect fool of himself, but he was quite correct in saying that I knew what he was about and was thoughtless enough to give him a free hand."

"Not with the cheque-book surely!" she exclaimed.

"With everything!" he assured her, and then his voice changed and a new light came into his eyes. "And now I have something to tell *you*. Joyce, dear——"

He had risen and come to her side. She started back in her seat.

"I love you! That's all I was going to say," he said.

She gazed at him very hard, but with no answering affection in her eyes. In fact her curious expression of mingled wonder and horror reminded him suddenly of the sitting-room at the Chic.

"You mean to tell me you actually allow another man to go about forging letters with your signature—inveigling me into coming up to London to meet him, and even to forge cheques on your account!"

"It does seem a little difficult to explain," he admitted.

"It is impossible!" she cried, "*unless* you have done something you oughtn't to, and this is how you pay for it. That is absolutely the only explanation!"

This reading of the situation

smote the unhappy baronet like a thunderbolt. For a moment he found it absolutely impossible to frame any answer at all. She gave him but a moment, and then her voice stung again.

"And now I hear that you were chased home last night, driving a strange car, with a strange man and a lady's dressing-gown and——"

"Stop!" cried the baronet. "Dash it, I draw the line at what I wore!"

"What you wore!" she gasped. "Do you mean you were *in* the dressing-gown and the——?"

He nodded with an abstracted air, and then suddenly he exclaimed—

"Look here, the only thing for it is to tell you the whole truth and just trust to you believing me. I give you my word of honour it's all literally true, but I don't suppose you'll believe me even then."

Joyce's expression entirely changed.

"If you give me your word, I shall believe you."

He looked gratified—even touched, but his eyes were still doubtful.

"I warn you it will be a very difficult story to believe."

Those horrible doubts began to return. Poor Joyce found her faith wavering already.

"I shall try my very best," she said in a voice that had a little tremble in it, "but please be—I mean you can be *perfectly* honest with me!"

For a moment Wyverne's face cleared.

"I've got one witness!" he exclaimed, and then his face fell again; "at least," he added, "I hope he will corroborate me—or anyhow see that my story *must* be true."

He left the room, and Joyce tried hard to assure herself that everything was going to be made quite clear and plain.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—PROOF.

Mr Swinby having been presented to Miss Demayne, Sir Wyverne plunged without further preamble into his extraordinary and (it must be admitted) almost incredible story. As set forth here, deliberately and in plain honest print, by a writer of no great talent but of some experience, the course of events becomes explicable and indeed almost obvious, one step leading to another, and that to the next, and so on. But it sounded quite differently when told merely voc-

ally by a man who actually stated that it had all happened to himself.

To add to the baronet's difficulties, he began to perceive very early in the tale that he was being listened to by an audience, one half of which was evidently acutely disappointed with the insobriety of the narrative, and the other half speculating as to why it was being beguiled with this remarkable romance. In consequence several of the most convincing details were acci-

dentally omitted, hesitation was observable at the less convincing incidents, and the climax fell absolutely flat.

"Well," said Sir Wyverne, when he had finished, "I don't know whether you believe me or not."

The audience glanced at one another and for a moment made no reply. Then with a great effort at heartiness Swinby observed—

"A jolly good yarn, old chap, I call it! I—er—have no gift myself that way, but I always appreciate other fellows' efforts."

"Dash it," exclaimed Sir Wyverne, "I've told you a lot of the actual things Archibald said to you! How do you explain my knowing them?"

"Oh, rather, that's most mysterious," admitted his guest, who was evidently trying very hard to please; "in fact, the only way it can be explained is if Archie met you when he left me and ran up to town."

"It's impossible he could have told me all that!" cried Wyverne.

He turned to Joyce and demanded—

"And how do I know all about what happened at the Chic, if I wasn't really Archibald?"

"I have no idea how many opportunities you had of meeting one another after I left," she answered quietly and a little frigidly.

"Look here!" exclaimed Wyverne, "I'll tell you a

few more things that happened."

He told them, and they were visibly impressed. Indeed Joyce grew decidedly uncomfortable, while Swinby opened his blue eyes wider and wider.

"It's perfectly extraordinary!" he exclaimed.

"It is quite uncanny," she admitted. "But then—then it's so impossible!"

"But how do I know all about what Samuel said or did?" demanded the baronet.

"Of course, I didn't know that fellow," Swinby reminded him.

"And I only saw him once," said Joyce.

"Maurice Peckenhams can confirm every word of it—and so can the people at Warrington Hostel!"

"Things that we can confirm ourselves are more convincing," said Joyce.

"Much," agreed Swinby.

At that moment Horrocks entered and came up to his master.

"Her ladyship wishes to see you, sir,—immediate," he said.

"Tell her ladyship," replied the baronet a little warmly, "that I am engaged and shall come when I am finished—and not before."

The butler left, and Sir Wyverne turned to his audience once more.

"Explain this!" he cried; "what happened at Mount-appleton's? How did I get there? How did Archie disappear? How did the naked man disappear? *How do you account for their clothes being*

left in that house, and themselves vanishing?"

They were evidently impressed, and both hesitated.

"Are you quite sure the clothes were left there?" asked Joyce.

"I saw them," said Swinby.

"You did," she exclaimed.

"And you are certain whose they were?"

"They *looked* like Archie's, but of course I can't answer for the other fellow's."

Her face fell a little.

"If I could only be quite certain of that!" she exclaimed, "and if one knew that both Archibald and Samuel had really vanished! What a pity you both left so hurriedly!"

"There were reasons for that," said Swinby.

"Couldn't you go back and get the clothes and make inquiries?"

"Swinby might," suggested the baronet.

"Or Sir Wyverne might," suggested Swinby.

"But I think it would be inadvisable," added the baronet.

"Extremely," agreed Swinby.

Suddenly Joyce's eye grew brighter.

"Have you any more of those capsules left?" she asked.

"No," replied Wyverne emphatically, "I am thankful to say I haven't, and I have learned my lesson too well to make any more!"

"Well then," said Joyce in a voice that seemed not far off tears, "how can you possibly expect even your greatest friends to——"

She was interrupted by the entrance of the dowager, an open letter in her hand, and on her face as formidable an expression as her oldest acquaintance had ever seen there. Lady Warrington-Browne surveyed the party with a hostile and yet triumphant eye.

"Wyverne," she began, "for the second time this morning you have been grossly lacking in respect for me. On the first occasion I warned you I would leave the house if you persisted in your intention of asking Miss Demayne to return. On the second occasion you refused to come to me when I sent for you. Had you come, you would have been spared the public exposure I mean to make now; and after it is made I do not think there is much chance of any self-respecting woman consenting to act as your secretary any longer."

"This sounds very ominous, mother," replied the baronet with his customary courtesy.

"Hush!" she said, "I do not wish any of your affectations of politeness now. Here is a letter which has just come to me from Lord Mountappleton. It is so urgent that he has sent a man with it in a car. I shall now read it aloud to you, and" (she added with extreme asperity) "your friends:—

DEAR LADY WARRINGTON-BROWNE,—As an old friend, well aware of the good influence you have hitherto exercised over your son, I feel it my painful duty to

inform you of the following series of occurrences at my house in the course of yesterday—

(1) In the morning I received a visit from a certain Mr Fitz-Wyverne, accompanied by a person of the name of Swinby. Mr Fitz-Wyverne purported to be a cousin of your son's, and was furnished with a note of introduction from him, requesting me to put this precious couple up for the night. This I consented to do out of consideration for your son and yourself.

(2) In the course of the evening my house was entered by a stranger who, from indications subsequently found on his clothing, was called Samuel Harris (or perhaps I should rather say, who assumed that name). This person divested himself of his clothing in Mr Swinby's room, and subsequently had the indecency to enter my sister, Lady Ellvin's bedroom, and actually to present himself before her in this unclad condition!

(3) Immediately afterwards Mr Fitz-Wyverne appears to have divested himself of his clothing also, and in company with Mr 'Harris' to have vanished into space. In spite of the most careful search, not a vestige of either individual has been discovered, beyond a series of deep heel-marks on my lawn. That these were made by Harris's boots seems certain, because his boots alone were not with the rest of his clothing. They led from beneath my sister's

bedroom window to the wall of the garden.

(4) Simultaneously Mr Swinby appropriated my fur coat, took Mr Fitz-Wyverne's car out of the garage, and was then joined by an individual who was seen descending from the garden wall attired in my sister's dressing-gown. This last fact, taken in conjunction with the others, conclusively proves that he can have been none other than 'Harris.'

(5) The fugitives' car was followed by one of my own containing three of my servants. The runaways were finally tracked down to your house, and there my servants were informed that *Fitz-Wyverne* had accompanied Swinby — whereas we know it was Harris. On making inquiry at the lodge, however, they discovered that the gates had just been opened to a car containing Swinby *and your son*, and nobody else. Therefore your son and 'Harris' are evidently identical.

(6) On subsequently searching the clothes of these two worthies, Fitz-Wyverne and Harris, the following articles belonging to your son were found in the pockets. *A.* In Harris's pockets—a fountain pen, a pocket diary, and four notices of meetings connected with philanthropic institutions. *B.* In Fitz-Wyverne's pockets—a card case, a cigarette case, and a post-card six months old signed 'Joyce Demayne.' As Fitz-Wyverne has vanished utterly, and as it seems incredible that your son should

have presented him with these peculiarly personal articles, it follows that your son must also have been Fitz-Wyverne exceedingly skilfully disguised. There is a little difficulty, I admit, in reconciling the apparently simultaneous appearance of Fitz-Wyverne in my drawing-room and Harris in my sister's bedroom. This, however, seems to me a trivial difficulty compared with the impossibility of accounting for the occurrences in any other way.

In case it should be your son's intention to exercise his somewhat peculiar talents at the expense of any of your other friends, it seemed to me that this brief account of his recent exploits might not be out of place.—Believe me, yours sincerely,

MOUNTAPPLETON.

P.S.—My purloined fur coat was returned last night, but my sister's dressing-gown has not yet been recovered. Unless your son finds it absolutely essential for his next masquerade, she would be greatly obliged if you would be good enough to send it back by the car that brings this letter.

M."

As the dowager raised her eyes after reading this damning indictment, she was startled to see that it had produced the most unexpected, and indeed extraordinary, effect upon her audience. Instead of looking crushed or guilty, Wyverne was smiling in positive triumph, and instead of shrinking from

him, Miss Demayne seemed actually radiant.

"Well," said he, "do you believe me now?"

"I do!" murmured Joyce.

"Mother," said Sir Wyverne as politely as ever, "you will find the dressing-gown in the top left-hand drawer in my room, and if you still propose to leave us, perhaps you had better see that it goes back in Mountappleton's car before you go. I may mention that Miss Demayne has decided to stay with me. At least," he added, turning to Joyce, "I sincerely hope you will."

The dowager was surprised, and vaguely disturbed to see that Miss Demayne blushed.

"If—if Sir Wyverne really wants me to stay very much," she answered in rather a low voice.

"I do!" said Wyverne.

"Then I go!" announced the dowager, and without waiting for any reply, she went.

"Oh, what a pity!" exclaimed Joyce, with no hostility now.

"We shall make it all right in time," said Wyverne; "we must — er — talk it over, though."

Both glanced instinctively at the third party, who, being a gentleman of considerable discernment, remarked that, if permitted, he should like to return to his interrupted study of 'The Sportsman.' And over a blazing fire in the billiard-room, with a box of his host's best cigars at his elbow, a glimpse of a deer-park from the window, and Security for his blessed companion at last,

the battered ex-hussar mused very pleasantly.

"With dear old Archie bottled up inside him, Warrington-Browne's all right!" he reflected. "He can't help being a good chap even if he tries. I do believe Archie has left me his extraordinary luck as a parting gift!"

In the library Sir Wyverne was also congratulating himself, for he was being made the happiest man at that moment in England.

The very heartiest congratulations Wyverne received were those of his old friend Maurice Peckenham. After expatiating on the beauty and virtues of the equally fortunate lady, the Major in the fulness of his heart could not help exclaiming—

"Thank God, you have settled down at last, Wyverne! England expects every man to do his duty, you know; and really, old chap, it isn't considered the duty of a fellow in your position to provide quite so much entertainment for the public."

"You have an extraordinary knack, Maurice, of putting public opinion in a pill-box," replied the baronet gravely. "I shall certainly try to be more decorous in future. And

by the way, talking of duty, I hear you have been doing yours."

The Major looked a trifle uncomfortable.

"I've been meaning to tell you all about that episode," he began.

"I know all about it already, and you did quite right!" said Wyverne.

Major Peckenham looked infinitely relieved. In fact, he even ventured presently to suggest—

"Some day, perhaps, you won't mind telling me the real facts about Harris and Fitz-Wyverne; will you, Wyverne?"

"I tell you what I'll do," said Wyverne, "I'll get some reliable fellow to investigate them and write them all out—make a kind of true story of them, so that you can read the whole thing for yourself. How will that do?"

"Right you are!" said the Major. "But get him to stick to the actual facts, and not draw any morals or try to reform anybody. I've had enough of the Samuel kind of thing!"

"So have most people," agreed Sir Wyverne. "Hullo, I hear Joyce calling me! Good-bye for the present!"

"Lucky dog!" murmured the Major with a little sigh.

A FLOWERY INTERLUDE.

FROM the first stir of spring to the full splendour of the early Macedonian summer, ere the sun had grown pitiless and all-consuming, was a rapid progress; and all along that thronging way had been colour of flowers, music of birds, pageantry of sun and air and earth. Macedonia is the true junction between East and West, when it is a question of nature's beauty, and one may see there all the wild-flowers of the English hedgerows and meadows growing hard by those of Kashmir and other gardens of the East.

The earliest of all the flowers to appear was the little yellow crocus, which pushed up everywhere upon the cold hillsides long before the winter was sped. Then, a little later, it was joined by purple and white crocuses, and again after a little while the tiny spangles of star of Bethlehem grew up where the crocuses had been. It was as though the increasing sun had opened the crocus chalices and bent their petals back until beaten flat. Still later, the earth was covered with asphodel, white and yellow, which some people hold to be far less pretty than its name, but which to me is full of charm and grace. Everywhere, too, anemones abounded, purple, magenta, white, and yellow, clinging more especially to the barbed-wire protection of the thorn bushes, from

whose shelter the marauding flocks of goats could not snatch them.

The procession of spring was now marching past most bravely, and each week brought with it a new group of flowers in bright array. I remember it was on Saint Patrick's Day that I first noted the blue sheen of millions of forget-me-nots in the young grass, and as we of an Irish Brigade knelt at Mass on an open hillside many men put sprigs of the little plant in their prayer-books for remembrance.

There were primroses in the ravines and violets in the woods. And I know of a gorge near Stavros that was full of snowdrops and summer snowflake, but a little earlier than this.

Soon the whole surface of the earth was clothed with buttercups and daisies, so that it seemed England; and then as one rode along, noting it all wistfully, one would come to a village, and great regal irises would spirit one back to northern India, to other associations and remembrances; for in this restless medley of war there is nought of continuity, only sharp contrasts and poignant recollections.

Then, when the grass and the corn had grown high, there came the long-stemmed flowers — corn-flowers and poppies, vetches of every kind, orchises, meadow-sweet, and purple

loosestrife. Field after field of these pathetic, oft-harried districts of a restless land gave us gay greeting of our national red-white-and-blue, with yellow—that colour of joy—thrown in as a makeweight everywhere. On any ground that showed the slightest rise the rock-rose clustered thickly, and when all the other flowers had succumbed to the drought and heat it kept bravely on, a lovely thing, with its magenta petals and yellow centre, but fading to a dead white within a few minutes of being plucked. Cyclamen, with its reminders of Italian hill-slopes, came out, too, with the long-stemmed flowers, and in some woods was that wonderful blue convolvulus that cannot be looked upon unmoved.

The witch-elm and the plane were the most common trees in the region where we lay. Upon the former, long before the real leaves appear, there comes a verdure as of young foliage, that the unobservant take for leaves. But it is a blossom merely, that after a while sheds itself in a myriad seeds. A special wind that has been held in reserve for the purpose comes in due course to scatter them. Early rain-squalls loosen them, and the wind sends them falling like green snow, to lie inches deep beneath the trees, or to swirl madly down the torrents.

At first sight what an example of nature's boundless extravagance! Each of these seeds, perfect in itself, contains the germ of a great tree; but

not one in ten million is in the least likely to find an anchorage and to take root. And yet, when we think of it, we see that it is only by this lavish scattering that here and there, at long intervals, a seedling may find a chance to live.

The plane-tree grows hardily here too, and age-old, gnarled specimens are to be found in the beds of torrents, in the midst of tracts of country that appear at first sight treeless. The trees retain their last year's leaves, dry and crackling, until the new foliage has come into full leaf. Not till then do the old leaves drop to earth, their kindly work of shelter done.

The Macedonian villages possess a wonderful charm, and are as beautiful as their musical names — Zagliveri, Ilanli, Klisali, Azrameri, Livadi, to name a few. Sometimes they are perched upon crags or cling to the slopes of mountains, and then tier upon tier they rise, leaning back, as it were, from the drop below them. No town upon a hill can ever be ugly, I believe, and to me these clambering villages have always been things of beauty.

In certain lights, as when the sun is directly overhead, these crowded collections of buildings are scarce to be distinguished from the brown slopes on which they stand; but at other times they start out so clearly in the pure atmosphere that from a long way off one can make out their every detail. Their tiled roofs

are a medley of maroons, purples, and crimsons. The walls are of a shaded white, or occasionally washed with blue, and they have plentiful additions of latticed recesses, cool-looking and intriguing. There is always a large, raised, open chamber, running almost the length of the building, festooned with flowering plants and creepers growing from pots, and beneath it a sort of granary and byre, from which a rickety staircase leads to the room above.

The villages and the little towns of the plains are of a different beauty. There is more shade about them, more water, and more space. Zagliveri is one such. In the blossom-time, which comes in the Balkans much earlier than it does in England, it is beyond expression beautiful to enter a Balkan village just as the sun has set, when the hush of an Eastern evening has descended upon the scene. The quiet houses are embowered in blossom. Slowly and deliberately the flocks converge upon the village, and the sweet tones of their bells are heard at a great distance. Groups of girls, in their pretty peasant dress, are filling their pitchers at the ancient wells. The village greybeards sip their coffee outside the inns, and (for they are great politicians) earnestly discuss the latest month-old rumour from distant Athens.

In one village that I visited several times, I made the acquaintance of the mayor and the local doctor. They were

sitting at one of several little round tables in the village square sipping Turkish coffee, and on my saluting them they invited me to dismount from my horse and join them. The doctor spoke French fairly well. It was just at the time of the institution of the Allies' blockade of Greece, and he asked me anxiously how long it was going to last, for the people in his district would assuredly starve if it went on, he said. He looked like a mild Mephistopheles, and had the most beautifully shaped hands, and charming manners. The mayor spoke only a word or two of French, but he nodded corroboration of all that the doctor said. While we were talking a fourth person joined us, whom the others referred to as Venizelos, a joke which seemed to amuse them all very much. The crowd of open-mouthed spectators that had come to gaze at the British officer was kept at a respectful distance by the mere presence of these civic dignitaries, but it closed relentlessly in on my Scottish orderly and horses, marvelling at the red hair of the one and the immensity of the others, so different are our chargers in stature to their own wretched little drudges.

The doctor and mayor both asked me eagerly for news. They said that living as they did, so far from the beaten track, they got few newspapers, and only very old ones at that. But they had heard, by some means or other, that a new Liberal paper, printed both in

Greek and English, was shortly to be started in Salonika. I had not heard of it; but some time afterwards I came upon the first number, which I secured. Alas! something must have "slipped," for on the front page there appeared the following

NOTICE

We beg pardon from our readers for the very bad English of our paper. We have discovered our unrepereable mistake the very last moment.

We have been deceived unconsciously; our neset Paper-number will prove real English.

In leaded type at the head of the page was this heading:

THE COMPLAINTS AND THE
BITTERNESS OF THE GRECK
PEOPLE DURING THE LAST YEAR.

TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF
THE GRECKS.

And it led off:

"SIRE,

"You are the child of the Greck people you are his creature You have been nourished with his own milk, with his pure milk, a milk of so many bitternesses, of so long a slavery and of so many shopes you belong to him entirely and you are the great Child which this people created as his symbol as a holy symbol for the realisation of his national dream."

And so on, in the same

breathless strain. One wondered whether the occasional Greek letters with which the demon compositor had eked out his supply ought not to have been German. The "we have been deceived unconsciously" lent colour to this view.

I noticed while I was chatting with my new-made friends that they and all the habitués of the little inn had chaplets of large beads, like rosaries, which they constantly kept passing through their fingers. Even the Turks (of whom there were several at neighbouring tables) had them. The doctor informed me that the practice had no religious signification whatever, being merely, in fact, a variant of the pastime known among us as "twiddling one's thumbs" — own brother to the politician's "wait-and-see."

Just before bidding my kind hosts farewell I handed a little offering to the mayor, for the relief of his poor, and in doing so made some very firm friends for England.

There was a large grassy space outside this village, which I called the Playing Fields. It was of a vivid green, and surrounded by willows, poplars, and great shady planes, while a limpid stream flowed round two sides of it. On this space the young people of the village used to hold sports and dances of a Sunday afternoon, and on feast-days. The girls nearly always danced separately from the men, and the dance which they most favoured was one in

which they linked arms and moved slowly round in a circle most decorously. Their dresses, reaching just to the ground, were very full and rich, and, it must be admitted, not over-becoming. They closely resembled those which one sees in portraits of Tudor princesses. Their magnificent hair (by far their best feature) was done in two long plaits, which hung down to their waists, and they either went bareheaded or wore gaudily coloured handkerchiefs on their heads. The men also danced together, but with infinitely more grace and abandon. Many wore the picturesque national dress—short black zouave jacket, brown knee-breeches, wide crimson *kamar-band*, gay stockings, fur cap. It was interesting to note that their breeches were adorned in front of the thigh with mohair points, the origin, no doubt, of the embroidered lace that used to appear upon the full-dress hussar pantaloons.

The sports were always carried out with great zest, and in these, as well as in the dances, Greek soldiers on leave, or stationed locally, frequently took part. Unfortunately (for they spoil the local colour) there were often present some through-going specimens of the "returned American," and then one was certain to be accosted in exasperating Bowery, and addressed "Hello, Boss, having a look round?" in a way that was partly patronising, partly insinuating, and wholly repulsive. No national dress in these cases,

but a horribly accurate imitation of Epping Forest, and the villainous garb that khaki uniform has temporarily, at least, replaced. I told one young specimen of the class that he ought to be dancing, and he took his place at once with the performers, and I am bound to say was easily the best dancer there.

"Putting the weight" is a great feature of the sports. I once offered a small money prize for the best "put," and it was won (as I fancied it would be as soon as I saw him) by a wild young giant from the mountains. As I was about to mount my horse on that occasion to return to Camp, somebody dashed out from the crowd to hold my off-stirrup. It was my friend who had carried off the prize.

By the time I was ready to move off that evening, having just allowed myself long enough to get home without undue haste, a fiddle band appeared. The musicians promptly started playing a close imitation of God Save the King, and barred my passage, so that I had again to dismount and listen. In the middle of their fifth rendering of the air I asked my Bowery hero if he would get them to play the Greek national anthem. This they did, and after I had stood at the salute, and given them all great pleasure by doing so, I mounted once more and rode off home.

In another village, one this time that was situated very beautifully on the wooded spur

of a mountain, I came upon an inn that seemed composed entirely of a single large room, where little tables were ranged round the walls, and from whose western windows a magnificent view could be obtained. The floor was sprinkled with sawdust, and bunches of dry herbs hung from the ceiling. It was full of Serbian soldiers, in their handsome slate-grey uniforms, drinking coffee, or making a frugal meal off lentils—all of them fine big men, very hard and tough. They punctiliously returned my salute as I entered, and then went on with their animated talk. In one corner a young infantryman was singing a wild-sounding Serb song, that seemed to come in gusts like the wind. Some days afterwards I saw a regiment of these men on parade, and it seemed to me that very few of our regiments—even those grand soldiers of our nearly dead, but still *deathless* Old Army—could equal the precision and steadiness of their drill. They have the Potsdam drill-book at their fingers' ends; but their *verve* and spirit are all their own.

In writing of Macedonia in the spring one cannot long keep away from the subject of the flowers. Eastertide this year coincided in point of time in both the Orthodox and the Western Church. The Greeks observe the feast with great devotion and rejoicing. After the long and strictly kept fast of Lent (during which the flowers have not stood still,

but only the people's use of them) the whole populace seems to turn to making garlands and bouquets. The maidens of the villages weave them into their beautiful hair. They come to meet you on the outskirts, and bedeck your horse's brow-band with lilac, and make pretty play with coloured scarves.

The birds, too, at this season break forth into song and colours. All through the winter we have noticed that the thickets are alive with the smaller birds, whose twitterings are never still. But the real song-birds seem to spring to life in April, so that of a moonlight night the ravines thrill with the bulbul's note. The cuckoo calls far into the night. His call is quicker and more often repeated than that of the English bird, and perhaps not quite so mellow. The bulbul is not so sweet or poignant as our nightingale, but very wonderful none the less.

Of bright-plumaged birds we see many, some of them old friends of Indian days. The blue jay, who looks so like a painted Russian toy when he is seated, is here, and the golden oriole flashes through the foliage of the lake-side trees. The kingfisher appears also, and many another creature that might be a flower that has taken wing.

Large birds, too, began to arrive in vast numbers early in March, and soon they were busy with their building plans. Dado-like flights of storks and

great cranes passed and re-passed, circled overhead and surveyed the scene below. Slowly they became aware of the changes that had come to their immemorial haunts. For rows of trenches now traversed the plains, boats of great swiftness were on the lakes and *jhils*. At first the loud reports of big guns registering sent a mighty fluttering and commotion through all the bird creation; but after a little while it went unnoticed. And, hardest of all to grow accustomed to, foreign birds—gigantic on a scale beyond all bird or animal experience—ofttimes sailed by overhead, with a noise like that of the rattle of ten thousand storks, and with never a flap or flicker of their wings. And of these great birds there were two kinds—one that was peaceable enough and that never seemed to cause alarm along the trenches, and he was shaped, indeed, very like a crane; and the other, clearly some huge hawk, which never sailed into ken but he was met by loud thunders from the hills. A queer swishing sound would follow through the air, and lo! little puffballs of smoke would appear all around the raider, which would then turn round and vanish to the north.

The stork, that most imperturbable of birds, learnt quickest to discount all these excursions and alarms, and on mature consideration saw no reason why he should abandon his ancient nesting

site. He does not seem, this grand old philosopher, to fear anything short of actual attack by man. He insists, though, on building in a spot from which he can *see*, while by reason of his perfect immobility he escapes man's interference, though his position is ludicrously exposed. To the native the stork is probably a sort of mascot, or a being to be placated, for he is seldom or never molested. Once indeed, but once only, I saw some small boys stone a stork off the nest; but no harm was done, and they seemed thoroughly penitent as soon as they had gained their point.

The village houses have often got square stone chimneys to them—which, of course, are not used once the winter is past—and on top of these the stork often rears his huge nest of twigs. The male and female bird both help in the building of the nest, and when it is finished they stand pensively in or by the side of it for hours on end gravely regardant. Save for a peculiar noise, like a policeman's rattle, made at intervals by the rapid opening and shutting of their bills, they remain rigidly still.

But not alone the chimneys have their storks' nests, for each of the ancient plane-trees that surround the village has clusters of them in its branches; and above these, on the topmost pinnacles of the trees, are the smaller nests

of grey herons, who look like lesser editions of the storks, and who also sit watchful and motionless, gazing steadfastly out across the landscape. And almost uncanny are the crowds of rooks that chatter and dispute on the lower twigs of the nests and in the branches. Their chattering and disputation seem to have but one subject—the pillaging, should the chance offer, of the great, built-up nest above them. They are waiting for “something to happen” to its occupant. In just the same way I have seen them gather round a wounded ox, waiting, waiting, waiting.

I do not think that both the male and female stork can ever leave the nest at the same time, for assuredly if they did the ruthless horde of rooks would fall to and break it up. Probably they take it in turns when they wish to fly abroad into the fields of cultivation. To these they often go; and one may see them striding gravely about among the toiling peasantry, only taking wing and flying to another point on the approach of strangers such as we.

In flight the stork is even more curious than in repose. He sticks his long red beak straight out in front of him, and his long red legs behind. A flick or two from his black wings, and then he will glide through the air for a couple of hundred yards, keeping them stretched motionless above his snow-white body. Head-end

and tail-end then look precisely alike, and one might fancy him flying either backwards or forwards at will.

Nature is not always gentle in these parts, and in her savage moods her ruthlessness brooks no denial. But man learns wisdom by experience, and it is not likely that the havoc wrought by the first storm that visited our valley will be repeated.

Down below a certain camp that was situated on either side of a ravine there ran a tiny trickle of water, the feeblest apology for a stream. For weeks it had been shrinking, as the days grew hotter. But as the heat increased the black thunder-clouds gathered in the sky, moved slowly round the mountains, and discharged their floods of waters into other watersheds than ours. For it is a curious thing in those parts that the rainstorms are so local that where one ravine may become a furious torrent, the next one, because leading down from another watershed, will often remain quite dry. On this particular night an entire bank of clouds must have emptied itself into our stream, for following hard upon the thunder, the forked lightning, the sudden sinking of the glass, in a great roaring wave the flood came down, filling the valley with seething waters. It took its toll both of men and animals, and by morning it had subsided, almost as quickly as it had arisen.

In the evening of a beautiful day of sunshine, amid the song

of birds and all the heedless
bravery of nature, a little pro-
cession moved out to the
cemetery, to lay two young
Irishmen to rest. It passed
over the very stream that had
drowned them, picking its way
by means of stepping-stones
that had been covered by deep
water only a few hours before.
When the piteous volleys had
been fired, and the tremulous
strains of the bugle-call had
died away on the evening
breeze, two of the dead boys'
comrades stepped forward, a
little awkwardly and stiffly,
and laid wreaths of wild-flowers
beside the graves.

.

If these lines have dealt over-
much with flowers and the like,
perhaps that very fact, seeing
the times we live in, may be
considered their justification.
For though in some ways a
flower, or a bird, or a view, may
count for less to-day than they
did in the secure days of peace,
yet in others they count for so
much more. Surely the moods
wherein they count to us for
less are those that have been
forced upon us; while the
others are the outcome of a
sharpening of our vision, a
truer appreciation, a fuller re-
alisation of what God meant
when he made us in His
image.

WITH THE "WELL BROUGHT-UP" ON THE LAND.

WHEN first we announced to our friends that in response to many imperative calls for the educated woman to come forward and save the country, we were "going on the land," they all seemed to have at least one friend or relation who had applied months before and had not been taken. They all knew addresses of organisations to whom to apply, and, in fact, though they all told us it would be so good for us—"such a thorough rest!"—none of them held out the least hope of our being among the chosen thousands. This was somewhat discouraging, unless one happened to know the friend or relation, and realised her complete unsuitableness for "the land." Those who stuck it after the first two terrible days were either girls straight from a school or college where they had been well accustomed to hard exercise, or if they were older, they were women who had earned their living in some strenuous pursuit such as nursing. The stay-at-home girl, and the married woman who had never been obliged to "stick it," were conspicuous by their absence, and the two who gave up at the outset were quite young business girls, not yet broken in to "sticking it," and unable to bear the strain.

When we were called the first morning soon after 3 A.M., and found the world hidden from us by a particularly wet

fog, the first thing that struck us was that hardly one of us had the proper clothes for the work. Smocks and sun-bonnets would have been ridiculous, for it was almost freezing; nothing but an old waterproof and a rain-hat would meet the case, and it had to be a very short waterproof too, with a belt to pull it up, blouse fashion—otherwise we did nothing but step on it as we stooped. Our sleeves got soaked to the elbow, and our boots and puttees to the knees. About ten o'clock it began to drizzle badly, but the strawberries were so late this season, and so likely to spoil in such weather, that we had to keep on nevertheless.

That first morning of strawberry-picking none of us will ever forget. It was hardly dawn when we arrived at the field at 4.30 A.M., and it was cold and depressing and gloomy. There were troops of other pickers who jeered at us, and talked openly of hooting us off the field. We were each given two baskets to tie round us, and told to take one row of an immense field whose end we never saw at all, because of the fog. The fruit was more plentiful than any of us had ever seen it, and was to be picked without the "strigs." This involved a twisting pinch which hurt our thumb-nails and drove the quicks down in a way that injures them for good and all. To the end of our days we shall look as though we bit our nails,

because of that morning's work. Some tried to work in gloves, but the damp simply ripped up all the seams of the leather gloves, while the rubber gloves burst in half an hour. Our hands were numb and swollen with the cold in no time. We had to stand with one foot each side of the plant and bend almost double. If we squatted at the side our clothes got drenched, and, what was more important, we stepped on the fruit in the next row, and lost no end of time getting up and down, as of course we got stiffer and stiffer as the hours went on.

We picked one basket an hour each that first morning. For each basket we were paid 2½d.

About 7.30 we went back to our quarters for a hot dinner of meat and vegetables, which we all thought we could not possibly eat at such an hour, but when we had changed our wet boots and stockings and rested a few minutes, we managed it, nevertheless. We returned at 8.30, bringing with us bread and cheese to eat when we knocked off for an hour at noon. We could eat as many strawberries as we wanted to, but we afterwards found it was not etiquette to go and take strawberries when we happened to be working on raspberries.

That afternoon we were put on to the raspberries, and the other pickers, who lived in caravans or were camping in the cow-sheds on the farm, pretended to be very angry. "Why should *they* do the rasp-

berries and not us?" they asked. "I'd be ashamed to go about dressed like them. Not decent, I don't call it." They called such remarks to each other in a loud voice as we passed. "They're the sort as is called 'well brought-up,'" they explained to each other in tones of scorn. This was their rendering of the term "educated women," and as a matter of fact it was the more accurate definition. They were specially angry at the breeches of two or three of the younger ones. They had no objection at all to gym dress, which really showed more leg than breeches and a smock.

We were only too delighted to get away from them and arrive at the raspberries, where we could straighten our backs part of the time at least, and where the pay was 3d. a basket. But even those superb raspberries were very much smaller than the strawberries, and they crushed horribly when picked by inexperienced hands in a hurry. We learnt afterwards how to pick them so that they never broke, however ripe they were, and our hands remained clean; but that was not attained all at once. The bushes were soaking wet, of course, and tall nettles grew everywhere. We had been brought up in the tradition that fruit for jam must be picked in dry weather, but the farmer scoffed at the idea. He had sold his crop to the largest jam-maker in England, who was not going to shut down just because it rained. The farmer sent so

many tons to the factory every day in immense motor lorries, and said the fruit was all the better for having plenty of water in it. It weighed more. We had another shock when we saw the fruit being crushed down into the vats in which it travelled to the factory. Indeed, it was only for our own sakes that we tried to pick the fruit without crushing it, as then it did not sink down, and we filled the baskets more rapidly.

We picked and picked till 5 P.M., when we were called off. The strawberry field had been firm underfoot even in the rain, but the raspberry field was crumbly, and turned our ankles as we stumbled down the long lines to give up our full baskets. The pain was not too bad the first day, but the second and third days it was almost impossible for some of us to crawl home.

When we did get home, we one and all threw ourselves on our mattresses for a few minutes' rest before we could even take off our boots or wash.

Under the stern rule of our forewoman, we had to be in bed by 7.30, and that first evening there were no rebels. But neither were there any slackers the next morning when the alarm sounded at 3.10, though there was a chorus of groans, and several who tried to get up too rapidly sat down again very promptly. But we knew we should be stiff and that we could work it off. We knew the third day would be the

worst, and believed that afterwards things would mend. The sun came out for the first time in the middle of the third day, and it blazed all through the fourth and fifth days. There was heavy fighting going on in the North of France those two days, and the distant guns shook and rumbled all day and all night, which got on our nerves in our fagged state. One girl fell out owing to slight sun-stroke.

We did not get any quicker at the work as the week went on. We finished the beautiful mature field and went on to others which got shorter and scaggier, until on Friday afternoon we were marched to and fro between four different fields, gathering at every patch a few little scrappy raspberries which sank down in the baskets with the heat. That was an awful afternoon, quite the worst we ever had, and in the middle of it the farmer discouraged us still more by telling us we were not to work at all on Saturday. None of us had earned enough even to pay for our food—not even the one who had had eighteen months' experience of farm life and was used to that kind of fatigue. It seemed such a miserable state of things to toil as hard as this, and be on the go about thirteen hours a day, and then not to earn more than 7s. or 8s. a week. We besought him to let us strip the bark off the willow-trees, as we had seen some of the gipsy women doing. A good deal of timber had been felled on the farm

during the week, and we wanted a change of work badly.

"I'll tell you what, you can strip hops," said the farmer.

We did not understand, as we knew the hops wouldn't be ripe for at least two months. He did not explain what we were to do, but we were so keen to do something that he said we could turn up at eight next morning and work till one.

"It's very hard work," he said, "much harder than raspberries, and I'm afraid your hands won't stand it." We laughed and said it couldn't anyhow be harder than picking strawberries. We were to get 1s. 6d. for our half-day's work, and as none of us had filled even one basket of raspberries that afternoon, owing to the time wasted in tramping back and forth, and to the way the wretched little berries melted in the heat, we thought this pay quite princely. As a matter of fact it *was*, for hop-stripping, and no doubt was meant to console us for the hardships of the afternoon.

We all woke up soon after three next morning, from the force of a very new habit, and heard with the most luxurious feelings the steady downpour of as heavy a shower as could be imagined. We had not to get up till half-past six, and by that time the rain had ceased, though there was a dense wet fog as usual. But just about seven a messenger came from the farm to say it was no use our coming, as the hop-field we were to have

attacked was nothing but a swamp, and we should do more harm than good. So we did not earn our eighteenpence after all.

There were only two mornings on which we could see the sun rise. Usually there was a thick fog which lay on the ground and the bushes like rime, and did not disappear until ten o'clock. We got later and later in starting work, as the fog made the mornings very dark, and soon we could not see the fruit at 4.30 or even at 5. We were sorry, as all of us found it much easier to work before eight, and we grew slower and slower as the day went on,—also as the week went on. We thought that in the second week at least most of us would earn 3s. a day, for we had been assured over and over again before we came that the veriest beginner would earn 15s. a week right from the start, but we did not average 2s. 6d. a day, even on the good bushes with which we began each week. In the middle of the second week we asked for a rise of a halfpenny a basket, and got it, but immediately afterwards the farmer announced that the raspberries had "gone back" and the crop had practically failed. The strawberries being now over, his regular pickers could manage the rest, and, in fact, we got the sack. This was a great blow to us, as we could never have gone through with it unless we had imagined that we were badly needed, and we had hoped to help with the harvest, and to get enough odd

jobs to carry us on to the hopping season, to which we all looked forward, as every one told us that "hopping was ladies' work," and far easier and pleasanter than anything else that women could do on a farm. It seemed so absurd that we should be no more use, after the many impassioned appeals in the newspapers to the "educated women" to go on the land. We had been buoyed up so far by the hope that presently we should get over our fatigue and stiffness enough to do something besides work, eat, and sleep. The papers had been full of pictures of girls working on the land who found time and energy enough to enjoy themselves, and we heard of dances and picnics and all sorts of fun.

The farmer promised us a first-rate character, and said we had stuck it very well, far better than he expected. He said, however, that he had never really wanted us at any time, as he had quite as many of his regular pickers as usual, but that he had been so bothered by the Government officials to try us that he had consented, as it had so happened that the strawberries were very late, and had to be picked at the same time as the raspberries. This made us more disheartened still, as we had not at all enjoyed ourselves so far, and it was very hard to find we had not been wanted at all. Not one of us would have grudged all our health and strength for our country, but in view of his very frank remarks we could

not feel that we were doing a patriotic work.

If we had all gone out in our oldest clothes and bought nothing specially for the work, we might have flattered ourselves that we were setting a useful example to the natives, but as a number of us aroused the most violent antagonism, especially among the village women, by wearing breeches, with or without smocks or overalls, we could not honestly have even this consolation. The other women just thought we were "play-acting." Besides, they were already at work in sufficient numbers, and we often saw one wearing the Board of Agriculture green armlet, signifying that they had worked on the land for at least forty days. They were probably all eligible, but had not taken the trouble to apply for it, or to wear it when they had it.

It is a question, too, whether any girl who has to earn her living in a town is not making too great sacrifices by taking her holiday working in the fields. There is hardly any ordinary occupation open to women where a prematurely aged appearance is not a great handicap. Of course, for a manicurist, complexion specialist, or actress, such work would be suicidal; but it may be retorted that the war could be won without such as they. But apart from those whose face is literally their fortune, such indispensable people as nurses, clerical workers, shop assistants, and teachers, whether of mathematics or

music, cannot afford to indulge in blunted fingers, smashed nails, bleached hair, strained ankles, flat-footedness, or any of the other disfiguring accompaniments of outdoor work. Incipient wrinkles are brought out into cruel relief by sunburn, and it does not improve the skin to be blistered at any age.

Women who have gardened and golfed all their lives will say this is all absurdly exaggerated, that they have never suffered these ills. It is strange, however, that they are conspicuous by their absence from among those who are doing this temporary work on the fields. They don't seem in any hurry to work from 4.30 A.M. to 5 P.M. every day of the week, in all temperatures, for several weeks at a time.

Those of us who wore our oldest clothes found that they were not a success, because nothing suitable for life in London will stand the strain of field work. Underclothes were torn, blouses were too thin to keep out the sun, stockings were not thick enough either for comfort or to prevent bites from horse-flies and mosquitoes, heels were not broad enough, and the boots we had thought so strong and heavy in town turned over and got painfully out of shape. Yet it was not economically sound to buy a special kit when we could not even earn enough to pay for our food. We were in any case seriously out of pocket the first week, because of the

repairs and re-heeling of boots, and the bandages and lotions we were compelled to have.

We did not really suffer in health in the least. We had plenty of good, though very plain food, and as much fruit as we could eat; but we none of us slept enough, and soon showed it in our faces. None of us were used to camp life, of course, nor even to sharing a room. We never slept really soundly, and it was very difficult to get used to dressing and undressing in a crowd, and washing all in a row at basins standing side by side on a bench. We knew we were less crowded than the soldiers who had been billeted there just before, but perhaps men don't mind these things quite so much.

So when the crisis came and we were sacked, a good many went home, feeling that they were not any use to their country, and need not consider it necessary to sacrifice themselves any longer. We who stayed did so because we had nowhere to go: our people were away and our homes shut up, or there was some similar reason for not leaving. Our leader went round to other farmers and got work for us in another village near by. The farmer in question kindly made it plain from the outset that he did not need us, but was quite willing to let us "play about" at his expense. We were to be on time-work, not piece-work, so that it did not matter to him when we started in the morning, nor how long

we took for meals, nor when we left off, so long as our forewoman kept an exact account. We had to do the work properly, of course, while we were at it, and two of our number were dismissed because they could not speed up sufficiently. We were put in the way of earning enough to pay for our food, and that without killing ourselves with overwork. The rest of the time we could play, and it was at this stage that a press photographer came along and took numbers of photographs of us in various situations quite unconnected with our work. These photographs appearing in the papers, doubtless gave rise to as many misconceptions as those we had previously seen of other girls, and indeed were taken by the same man. Paddling in a Roman well, painting under a huge white umbrella, cooking over our brick fireplace, swimming, climbing ladders,—these were not the ways by which we earned our living.

We were lent an oast-house close to the river, but we had no gas or any other stove, no mattresses, even hay-stuffed hop-sacks, no furniture or utensils, except three billies, six pails, and six washing basins. All the rest of our necessities were lent us, and by degrees, so that at first things were very primitive indeed. In spite of this we enjoyed ourselves very much at this village. It was one of the most beautiful villages in England, in the first place, and the people were unboundedly

kind to us. In three houses they arranged for us to have baths; two ladies offered to cook for us whenever they had a kitchen fire going; one lady gave hospitality to our leader; the vicarage lent us a trestle table, chairs, looking-glass, and hosts of other things, and gave us as much wood as we wanted; the owner of the open-air swimming bath gave us the free use of it; the G.R.'s in the neighbourhood (who had previously been quartered in our oast-house and knew its possibilities) came and built us a brick fireplace on the path outside, and covered up our tiny tent when the Defence of the Realm Act was thrown heavily down on us for possessing such a thing.

People asked us to tea and gave us fruit and vegetables, and did everything possible to make things pleasant for us. The farmer sent us some hop-sacks, but we had only some rather dirty straw to stuff them with, which we did with shrinking and misgivings, but they were groundless. Except for the horrid smell, there was nothing wrong with that straw, and what does a little thing like a smell matter when one is camping? We had got over the first great fatigue, and were in much better spirits. The less accommodating had gone home. We slept better, not being so crowded. We did not get up so early, and though we did not actually sleep in the open air, it was nearly as good: there were so many windows and doors and

trap - doors, all wide open. There was a weir just in front of the oast-house, and the rushing water lulled us to sleep and reminded us of mountain torrents. Some of us were afraid of rats, which certainly came the first night, and there were earwigs and a frog, but they were not half so horrid as the cockroaches in the first abode.

At first we were hop-strip-ping, which was not nearly so hard as the first farmer had led us to suppose. We had to buy very stout leather gloves, however, which cost a good deal and wore out in a few days. The trailers or laterals whipped us in the face or round the neck and raised angry red weals, which fortunately did not last many hours. The leaves cut our wrists and smarted like nettles, and our clothes got very much stained. We had been glad to find that the raspberry stains which looked so dreadful at first came out in cold water, but these hop stains did not show at all until the garment was washed, and then they were fixed for ever. A preliminary soaking in cold water helped matters hardly at all in this case.

It was very hot and stuffy under the hop vines in the sheltered hop gardens, but the work itself was easy, though very monotonous. After a few days six of us were sent to pick plums at an old orchard. We had to climb the trees, and this was work we all enjoyed very much. There was a lad

about 15 working with us, and it was intended that he should climb to the top of the trees, while we on ladders picked all around. But he worked it so that he picked all the easy plums and left us the inaccessible ones that took a long time to get,—about half a dozen on each tree taking longer to pick than the easy peck he had previously culled off the same tree. So we presently tumbled to his tricks and picked our own trees all over. What a difference this made may be deduced from the fact that the first day the six of us only picked three pecks to his ten.

The boy had a way of falling down with half the tree on the top of him. Plum wood is very brittle. He used to lie still till we all rushed up from all quarters, crying, "Oh, are you hurt?" when he would arise smiling and saying, "Not at all." He did this three times in one afternoon, but after that we took no notice, and he stopped breaking the boughs in this lavish manner. We had been told women could not pick cherries because they would break the trees with the heavy ladders, but we could not have done more in this line than that boy who only weighed about 6 stone. Some of us weighed ten or eleven stone, but we managed to get every plum on a high tree without breaking a twig.

Some of the ladders were very heavy indeed, and the ground was very rough and covered with dead thistles. There were any number of

birds about, including a large grey woodpecker. Nothing was done here to keep them away, whereas on the first farm there was a picturesque old official, whose duty it was to go round with a firearm with a truly fearsome bark, and fire it off at intervals. We called him "The Fowler," but he never killed anything. The gipsy boys, too, were sent to patrol with tin cans and trays, which they struck and rattled, especially about five in the morning, when the birds would be feeding. The result was that we scarcely saw a bird in the raspberry fields, while the orchard a mile away swarmed with them.

The last job was tidying the strawberry beds. For this we were each given a bill-hook to chop off the runners, and we all succeeded the first afternoon in cutting either our boots or our fingers. It was back-breaking work, and we got quite numb from stooping so long. Still it was cheering to find we could bear it better than the first day, more than three weeks before. The heat was terrific, and, sad to say, not having our stern forewoman over us, we stopped work an hour earlier than usual, and only earned 1s. 9d. instead of 2s. However, the farmer told us we were very honest, and he seemed quite struck with the way we used to make up the time if we were a few minutes late in beginning work.

So we began and ended with strawberries.

There will be a few odd jobs, enough to keep about five or six of us going for another week or two. We found women were not wanted at all for the haymaking, as it had been done by the soldiers; nor for the harvest, as one man does all the work with a reaper and binder. The regular pickers picked all the gooseberries, currants, and peas, and there seemed plenty of men for felling trees, carting, and every other heavy work not usually given to women. Every eligible man save one had volunteered from that village, but there were enough over forty-one left to do all the work; also, of course, there were some rejected. In spite of the fact that we were in a "Munitions Area," enough village women and gipsies had come forward to do the picking. We could not flatter ourselves that we were needed, and certainly in the first place we went to our coming was bitterly resented. Nor did we do ourselves much good until we came to the second farm and worked in a more civilised fashion. The first was "rush work," and extremely hard. Under the conditions in the second village we could have had a healthy and happy holiday, but not a profitable one. It would have been more satisfactory in many ways if we had not attempted to camp and work, as it is hard to work steadily if you have not a proper bed and regular meals to return to. The volunteers we met told us that too.

Those who went on route-marches and guard were not responsible for the cooking and the camp arrangements, whereas we tried to do both, and in their opinion we simplified the meals too much in consequence. Of course we were trying to live like the people who had to live on what they earned, but then we were not used to it—we were the "well brought-up."

Food was not easy to get, as the country was full of troops. We never saw an egg, and only got enough milk as a favour. Potatoes were a fearful price. Bread and meat came in motors from the nearest large town. Lodgings were not to be had

in the second village, though in the first they were plentiful and extraordinarily cheap.

Everything was in every respect different from what we had supposed, or been led to expect. We felt that if we had known beforehand what we had to put up with we should not have come, but having come, and endured, we managed also to enjoy.

As for the hopping, the real "Ladies' work," this is not for us. We are not wanted, as the London poor are coming down as usual. It is their holiday, and they are not to be done out of it by the "Well brought-up."

ELLEN WALSH.

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

To any politician :

*Mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.*

THOSE who believe that the world is governed with very little wisdom can find few better examples of incompetence in our annals than the Duke of Newcastle. For forty-six years he interfered wantonly in the government of Great Britain; he wellnigh succeeded in driving his country upon the rock of destruction; and he died still affecting, to himself at least, the vain and pompous manners of the heaven-sent statesman. He had made no attempt to fit himself for the discharge of the onerous duties he lightly assumed. Knowledge and intelligence were completely lacking to him. The education which Westminster School and the University of Cambridge had given him were thrown away upon his barren mind. To the end of his life he kept unsullied an inveterate ignorance. He believed that Cape Breton was an island, and he was once found looking for Jamaica in a map of the Mediterranean. When, in 1755, he was asked at a meeting of the Council, what was a squadron, he replied, "three ships or more!" George II. said, with perfect truth, that Newcastle was unfit to be the chamberlain of a petty German prince. He could not think; he kept

Stone and Murray to do his thinking for him. Irresolute and incapable, fussy and dishonest, he was indefatigable in the discussion of small things. On one occasion he argued for many hours whether the original or the translation of a certain document should be placed in the paper on the right or left of two parallel columns. At the same time he so bitterly disliked the transaction of real business that the discipline of the army was long suspended, because (in 1729) he would not take the trouble to countersign the King's order for holding courts-martial. "Who would not laugh," said Horace Walpole, "at a world, where so ridiculous a creature as the Duke of Newcastle can overturn ministries?"

It seemed idle to laugh. With all his folly, Newcastle not only overturned ministries, but made them anew. The scorn of patriotism or the censure of honourable men availed not to move him from his high offices. And it must be admitted that he took a low view of his own job. If he lacked talent himself he did not expect it in those whom their interest or his complaisance had advanced. "It would be a very bad precedent," he

said in 1737, "to punish everybody in office for not acting as if they had sense, . . . for everybody knew that there might be very good reasons for giving people employment in the State besides their having sense: they might have great titles, great estates, great property, great zeal to serve whoever was in power: nay, some—I won't say all—may, with very little sense, have great integrity and good characters; and such men it may be very proper for a Government to employ in offices, where sense is not much wanted. . . . But if such men were to see that they were to be responsible for not acting with all the circumspection of able men, when everybody knows that they might as well pretend to infallibility as ability, I think it would prevent many people from entering into the service of the Government whom it is very right from their property to attach to the interest of the Government: and I think, besides, that it would be as great an injustice for the House of Lords to punish a man for being a fool as for having the gout; they are both infirmities, not faults; they are the misfortunes, not the transgressions, of those who are infected with them, and make them much more objects of compassion than resentment." The candour of this amazing harangue was obviously inadvertent and unconscious. Never once did it occur to Newcastle's cloudy mind that a man should be chosen to do the King's business or to serve his country

merely because he was fitted by natural gifts for those pursuits, that it would not be prudent to enter a gouty man for a hundred yards' race. He smiled at those who thought that the world should be governed by a succession of talents. "I don't know," said the ironic Walpole, "whether there are not more parts in governing without genius." At any rate the Houses of Parliament acquiesced in their ridiculous leader, and believed, no doubt, that Pitt's gout was a worse infirmity than Newcastle's folly.

So he fumbled through life with hands "that are always groping and sprawling, and fluttering and hurrying on the rest of his precipitate person," *un certain tatillonnage*, a Frenchman called it; and so long as he remained in office, which he did with eminent success, he cared not what happened to his country. He had no skill in legislation. As an administrator he justly earned the contempt of all his contemporaries. He was idle, dilatory, and irresolute. He was determined that he would never do to-day what he might put off until to-morrow. Content to wait upon events, he thought there was always a chance of something favourable turning up. One desire dominated him, and one desire only: to remain in office. His ambition, restless and untiring, was satisfied with nothing less than political dominion. And for this dominion he had all the gifts that were necessary. He

was intimately at home in the *coulisses*. A master of intrigue, he was at his best in the secret, corrupt management of the two Houses, in playing off one group against another, in distributing places and pensions. In a debased age, he sank triumphantly beneath the level of his kind. Not even the infamous Bubb Dodington, who knew to a penny the market value of a borough, was a match for him. And in the purchase of votes he was never, I think, disturbed by a false shame. He was incapable of the hypocrisy which persuaded Bubb Dodington to confide to his journal in the midst of an election that he had spent three days "in the infamous and disagreeable compliance with the low habits of venal wretches." He expected to be asked for posts and pensions, livings and bishoprics, and if they were handy he gave them. Were he indifferent to the fate of England, at least he cherished a proper respect for a man "who could give his Majesty six members for nothing." Nor was there any move in the game to which he would not willingly stoop. To counter intrigue with intrigue, trick with trickery, was an achievement best suited to his temper, and in this sport, wherein alone he excelled, he spared neither friend nor foe. How he must have laughed when Halifax, having conspired with Dodington to contrive a Cabinet of their own, not merely told Newcastle all about it,

but took measures with him to defeat his and Dodington's own design! And surely Dodington should have known better than to be surprised at the manœuvre, because at that very time, and ever since, Halifax had spoken of Newcastle to him and to others "as a knave and a fool." There is a point at which the ingenuousness of politicians becomes intolerable.

In war or in peace the Duke of Newcastle had but one aim and one ambition—to purchase a general support at the expense of the country. His power, says Lecky, rested upon this ignoble basis—"upon the uniform employment of all the patronage of the Crown, and of a large proportion of the public money at his disposal, for the purpose of maintaining a parliamentary majority." England might be beaten on land or sea—the Duke of Newcastle was indifferent to her lot. What he could not bear was that any other than he should dip his fingers in the national purse. He clung to the secret service money with the feverish despair with which a drunkard clings to the key of a wine-cellar, and in a crisis of his, and incidentally of England's, fate, he deprived himself of Fox's aid, for what it was worth, because he would not surrender, and Fox, a greedier man than himself, would not forgo, the control of that delectable fund. At another time, when all honest men trembled for England's safety, he would not consent to the

addition of some necessary regiments to the British Army, because he could not bear to think that the Duke of Cumberland should have the privilege of appointing officers to them. Indeed, the two strongest passions of his soul were jealousy and fear. If he were unable to accomplish anything worth doing himself, he was filled with alarm at the deeds of others. Throughout a long life he pursued always the same policy of intriguing against those whom he served, or those who served him, as soon as he thought their influence too great. He owed his first advance to Walpole, who made him Secretary of State in 1724, because he thought that the boroughs he commanded would be valuable to his interests, and because he was convinced that Newcastle's lack of understanding would prevent him from growing into a dangerous rival. For once the astute Walpole allowed himself to be deceived. He reckoned not with Newcastle's cunning and effrontery, and before he could take steps to guard himself, he found Newcastle linking himself with anybody who would help him to stand upon his feet independently of Walpole. Thus he did his best to win Carteret to his purpose, and once when he was half-drunk—for he did not disdain the lesser vices—he waited upon Walpole with an offer of Carteret's services, and promised to go bail for Carteret's good behaviour. Walpole curtly

bade him choose between him and Carteret, and presently was made the victim of Newcastle's malevolence. Lord Harvey sketched the politician's position at Walpole's fall in terms of the bitterest contempt. "The Duke of Newcastle," said he, "whose envy is so strong that he is jealous of everybody, and whose understanding is so weak that nobody is jealous of him, is reciprocally made use of by these two men (Pulteney and Carteret) to promote their different ends; and being jealous of Lord Carteret from feeling his superior interest with the King, and jealous of Mr Pulteney from his superior interest with his brother (Mr Pelham) in the House of Commons, is like the hungry ass in the fable between the two bundles of hay, and allured by both without knowing which to go to, tastes neither, and will starve between them." Alas! he did not starve. With equal greed he seized both bundles, and was thus supported in his career of mischief. So in the same spirit of jealousy he quarrelled with his brother, whose influence in the House of Commons was too great for his endurance, and presently betrayed Pitt to Bute in bitter envy of the victories won by the British arms. Bute, in whom at last he met his match, assailed him pitilessly, expelled him from all the offices which he held, degraded those whom he had advanced, and left him

to nurse his jealousy in retirement.

But fear was a stronger passion of Newcastle's mind even than jealousy. There was nothing of which he was not afraid. When he was in office—and he was always in office—he dreaded the mere possibility of resignation. He feared to go to war; he feared to remain at peace. He was terrified by the clamour outside the Houses of Parliament, and had Byng shot to appease the people. He was afraid of the rebellious Scots, trembled before the Pretender, and in 1745 shut himself up for days in a state of doubting timidity. If only he had been sure that the Pretender would win, he would have joined him, since Great Britain without Newcastle was a thing he could not contemplate. "The other day," wrote Walpole, "I concluded the Ministry knew the danger was all over, for the Duke of Newcastle ventured to have the Pretender's declaration burnt at the Royal Exchange." Indeed this aspect of politics must have been very sure before he dared to take so desperate a step. But what frightened him most of all was the threat of a French invasion. He went about his business in a shaking tremor at the mere thought of France. And worse still, he infected his countrymen with the poison of his own cowardice. Fox declared in 1745 that "had 5000 Frenchmen landed in any part of this island a week ago, I verily believe the entire conquest

of it would not have cost them a battle." Ten years later, Newcastle in a panic fear hurried over Hessians and Hanoverians to England rather than employ Hawke and his fleet in their proper business of defence. Well might Pitt attempt, in denouncing the cowardice of Newcastle, his "little frivolous love of power, his ambition of being the only figure among ciphers," to rally the English people. "I want," said he, "to call this country out of that enervated state that twenty thousand Frenchmen can shake it. The maxims of our Government have degenerated, not our natives. I wish to see that breed restored, which under our old principles carried our glory so high."

Even had Newcastle's irresolution not prevented him from making up his mind, his pusillanimity would have forced him to inaction. Walpole said that he was "always at least as much frightened at doing right as at doing wrong." Perhaps the distinction between right and wrong was not very clear in his mind. And the fear which haunted him in public pursued him to the retirement of his home. When Dr Shaw, the King's physician, ate some mushrooms and was ill for a few hours, "the catastrophe so much alarmed the Duke of Newcastle, that he immediately ordered all the mushroom beds to be destroyed, and even the toadstools in the park did not

escape scalping in the general massacre." So even to the hour of his death the passion of his life pursued him. He died, as he had lived, in a panic, surrounded himself with doctors, and hoped perhaps that this last lavish expenditure might save him from the grave.

There was one thing only of which he was not afraid—Parliament. The bright, well-drilled Houses presented no terror to the mind of this finished intriguer. The Commons and the Lords were alike his henchmen, for he had purchased most of them with public money, and the rest were looking eagerly for promotion. When Shelburne was beginning a career of politics, Henry Fox summed up in a single letter of advice the whole gospel of Newcastle. "It is in place that I long to see you," said he to Shelburne; "and it is the place-man, not the independent Lord, that can do this country good." There in a sentence is displayed the complete politician. To be sure, there were not many independent Lords or Commoners either in the middle of the eighteenth century. Parliament itself, falling into a pit of corruption, was the slave of the Cabinet. If it had opinions, it found it profitable to suppress them, and incurred the danger of "becoming in time rather the oppressor than the representative of the people." As Pitt said, the House of Commons had "degenerated into a little

assembly, serving no other purpose than to register the arbitrary decrees of one too powerful subject."

The record of Newcastle's life is the record of the offices that he held, and the ministries which he made and unmade. Office was essential to him; he could not live without it. The service of his country would not have interested him, even had he been capable of it. But he delighted in comings and goings; in setting up A. against B. or C., and then betraying all three; in involving his nearest colleagues in intrigue, and sacrificing them without a murmur to the popular clamour. Nor for more than forty years was he long deprived of the office, essential to his own poor happiness, fatal to the poorer destiny of his country. From the time when, in 1724, Walpole made him a Secretary of State, unto his unlamented death in 1768, he was seldom without a seat in the Cabinet. He served with Walpole, with Wilmington, with his brother, Henry Pelham, with Pitt, and was disloyal to every one of them. Upon whatever he touched he left the mark of his incompetence. In 1743 he made the battle of Dettingen of no effect by refusing to assent to the Treaty of Hanau. A year earlier he had ensured the failure of an expedition to Cartagena by his meddling and muddling. Yet so tight was his hold upon the public purse, so well skilled was he in conciliating or dividing groups, that no disaster could shake

his supremacy. At the death, in 1754, of Henry Pelham, his brother, whom he had pursued with envy and malice, he became all-powerful in England, and continued within the space of three or four years to depress his country to the very depths of ignominy. "The poor Duke of Newcastle," wrote Horace Walpole, "conquers the torrent of his grief, and . . . rather than abandon England to its evil genius, will submit to be Lord Treasurer himself." He was more than this: he became universal Minister, that he might mismanage all things. "The Duke is omnipotent," again it is Walpole who speaks, "and to show that power makes use of nothing but machines." The failure of his plans did not disturb him. He was determined that Fox should lead the Commons and leave the control of the secret service money to him. Fox declined the dubious honour. He was determined that Pitt should resign. Pitt refused to resign. Newcastle remained "affronted—and omnipotent." And it was, in Dodington's phrase, "all for Quarter Day."

Moreover, Newcastle could do no more in an hour of stress and danger than carry the shifts and dodges of peace into a great war. He hoped that all would be well so long as Bubb Dodington and Halifax and Legge and Robinson and Fox played the old game of in and out with all the old skill, and let him draw whatever

profit he could from their dissensions. What did it matter that France armed, so long as there were boroughs to be bought or given away? When Pitt declared that "to times of relaxation should be left that fondness for disposal of places; wisdom should meet such rough times as these," he was speaking a language which Newcastle could not understand, and which, when once it had caught the popular ear, forbade the "shifty old jobber," for a while at least, to touch anything but the public money-bag.

The times, in 1755, were rough indeed. War with France, as any statesman would have seen plainly, was inevitable. It needed but a spark to set America in a blaze. The peace had already been broken in many a skirmish, and Newcastle refused not only to take action, but to see that the country was ready for action. Hungrily though he clung to power, he could not make up his mind, and let things drift as they would. In either House his majority was absolute, and he left his majority uncontrolled. Even when Braddock had been despatched on his ill-fated expedition, even when Boscawen had captured two ships of the French fleet, Newcastle persisted in the deception that we were not at war. "There was no violence," says Dodington, "no oppression, no particular complaint, and yet the nation was sinking by degrees, and there was a general indisposition proceed-

ing from the weakness and worthlessness of the Minister, who would embrace everything and was fit for nothing." However, in Newcastle's despite, we were soon fighting France all the world over, and the supreme Minister took no steps. As Waldegrave said, "we first engaged in a war, and then began to prepare ourselves." Newcastle would not prepare, even after hostilities had begun. Hawke was at Spithead with his fleet, and Newcastle was afraid to give him any definite orders. He thought it would be a good plan if "Hawke took a turn in the Channel to exercise the fleet, without having any instructions whatever." Thus he hoped to shift his responsibility without losing a single supporter. And when this ingenious suggestion was not approved, he proposed that "Hawke should be ordered not to attack the enemy unless he deemed it worth while"; that he should not take their ships unless there were more together than ten—that he meant this only of merchantmen, for to be sure he must attack any squadrons of ships of war; that he should take and destroy all French ships of war, but no merchantmen; that, finally, he should be restrained from taking any ships except ships of the line. What Hawke, or any one else, made of this jumble of opposites I do not know. It is certain that Newcastle plumed himself on an ingenuity which pretended that England was simul-

taneously at war and at peace.

His indecision at sea was equalled by his indecision on land. While he gave contradictory orders to the Admirals, he was resolved, if he could, to make war without an army. He was quite sure that a little goodwill and hopefulness were sufficient to defeat the most desperate foe. When Pitt proposed to strengthen and to train the Militia, the House of Lords, on Newcastle's order, threw out the Bill. Compulsion and increase were alike distasteful to him. "We have a Militia Bill," he wrote, "which may give us some trouble, as many of our best friends in the House of Commons are for it, from their zeal; but I am afraid the principles of it may prove *dangerous* to this country. The expense would be certain and immense—viz., £200,000 per annum at least. The use very uncertain. If the scheme should succeed, it must undoubtedly increase greatly the power of the Crown. But that which of all things I dread, it would breed up our people to a love of arms and military government, and divert them from their true business—husbandry, manufactures, &c.; and I think, upon the whole, would tend more to make this a military country and government than any scheme I have yet heard of." Zeal, indeed! What right has a self-respecting politician to show zeal, unless it be a zeal for the pocket? And for the rest, rather let England perish

than see the power of the Crown increased and herself a military nation ready for defence! Thus has the Whig spoken from the beginning, in those far-off days when he served the Devil, the first of his kind. Thus shall the Whig speak, until with the smug satisfaction of a false martyrdom he beholds his land in ruins.

The invasion, the thought of which had caused the wretched Newcastle to tremble in his chair of office, turned out to be a false alarm nicely contrived to cover an attack upon Minorca. And the English Minister did everything that was expected of him. He made no attempt to interfere with the French fleet, which set sail under the command of the Duc de Richelieu from Toulon. But three days after it had started he sent Admiral Byng, with an ill-fitted fleet, without marines, and with but a single regiment of soldiers, to defend Minorca against the superior forces of the French. So badly was Byng equipped that he was forced to linger at Gibraltar longer than was prudent, and when at last he reached Minorca, instead of giving battle to the French, he decided to retire to Gibraltar, and there to await reinforcements. After the departure of Byng, the Castle of St Philip could not hold out, and Minorca fell an easy prey to the Duc de Richelieu.

The failure of Byng was turned to excellent and instant

account by the adroit Newcastle. A wave of insensate indignation swept over the country. The Admiral was burnt in effigy from one end of England to the other. When a deputation from the city of London waited upon Newcastle to demand vengeance, the Minister showed an indecent haste in promising a scapegoat for his own incompetence. "Oh, indeed," he exclaimed, "he shall be tried immediately; he shall be hanged directly," and thenceforth the fate of Byng was sealed. He had become a pawn in the political game, and Newcastle was resolved not to lose a piece by attempting to save the life of one who might be innocent.

No sooner, then, did Byng arrive in England than he was closely imprisoned, and on December 21, 1756, began his trial before a court-martial. The sentence passed upon him was equivocal and half-hearted. He was acquitted of cowardice and disaffection, and found guilty, with many qualifications, of neglect of duty. The court, moreover, denouncing the great severity of the 12th Article of War, earnestly recommended him to his Majesty's clemency. Argument and recommendation were alike useless. For once the King and the mobility were united to demand the punishment of Byng, and at the same time to prop up a tottering ministry. For Newcastle, indeed, the Admiral's execution was a political necessity.

Were he to escape, Lord Anson, the First Lord of the Admiralty, would be no longer secure, and the great Duke himself, the supreme bestower of patronage, would receive such a shock as had never yet fallen upon his corrupt head. So Byng's life became a mere stake in the gamble of politics. The Ministers bribed and promised, according to their wont. They saw with delight the unpopularity which Pitt and Temple incurred, to their lasting honour, by protesting against a judicial murder. The blood of Byng appeared to be the best cement which could hold together the pieces of a disparted Cabinet. Newcastle, it must be admitted, left nothing undone which might strengthen him and his friends. The Duchess of Newcastle sent Lady Sophia Egerton to the Princess Amelia, begging for the death of Byng, and telling her that if Byng were spared, Lord Anson could not remain at the head of the Admiralty. "What a complication of horrors," exclaimed Walpole, "women employed on a job for blood!" More than Lord Anson's position was at stake. As has been said, the great Minister himself might have hanged if Byng had not been shot, and that in his eyes would have been the worst of national calamities.

Newcastle was not hanged, but not even the sacrifice of Byng availed to avert his fall. For many months Pitt had attacked him without mercy

and with manifest justice. Now, Pitt was not merely a greater and stronger man than any of those who bowed a willing knee to Newcastle in the two Houses of Parliament. He was made of a different clay; he was fulfilled with a different purpose. He alone among his contemporaries had gone into the business of politics without counting what he could get out of it. He was not interested in the sale of boroughs. When he was appointed Paymaster in 1746, he set a noble precedent by refusing to enrich himself at the expense of the nation. To his colleagues, no doubt, his conduct appeared foolish and ostentatious. They could not understand the scruple of a politician who desired simply and solely to serve his country. He appeared especially disgraceful in their eyes because, being a man of no fortune, he had refused to dip his hand in the till, and had thus set an example of political honesty which they had no intention of following. But if Pitt's sacrifice annoyed his fellows, it strengthened his hold upon the country, and gave an added weight to every blow that he struck at the quivering Newcastle. In a series of philippics, which he alone ever equalled, he prepared the way for his own advance. He knew well enough that he could not supersede the "one too powerful subject" until he had got him out, and that there was only one means of getting him out—by assault. His eloquence

caught the public ear, his images dazzled the people's eye. When the great conflict was engaged, his famous comparison between the Rhone and the Saone was still remembered. "I," he had begun with a mock modesty—"I who am at a distance from that *sanctum sanctorum* whither the priest goes for inspiration—I, who travel through a desert and am overwhelmed with mountains of obscurity, cannot easily catch a gleam to direct me to the beauties of these negotiations. But there are parts of the address which do not seem to me to come from the same quarter with the rest. I cannot unravel this mystery. Yes," he cried, suddenly striking his forehead, "I, too, am inspired! Now it strikes me! I remember at Lyons to have been carried to see the conflux of the Rhone and the Saone: the one a gentle, languid, feeble stream, and though languid, of no depth; the other, a boisterous and impetuous torrent. But they meet at last, and long may they continue united to the comfort of each other, and to the glory, honour, and security of the nation." The simile and its irony had an immediate and a lasting effect. The languid Newcastle and the boisterous Fox remained in men's minds, thus characterised, long after the speech had been delivered. The image of the go-cart, sketched while the fate of Byng's expedition was still in suspense, was never wholly effaced, and it completed Newcastle's discomfiture. "If I

see a child," said Pitt, "driving a go-cart close to the edge of a precipice with the precious freight of an old king and his family, I am bound to take the reins out of such hands."

But before Pitt could take the reins out of the weak, crafty hands which held them, there were a hundred petty conspiracies to be set on foot and foiled. It is the curse of politics that nothing can be done simply. Even he who would save his country must first wade through the dirty water of intrigue. With the war upon us, Newcastle still deferred the day of salvation. There were secret meetings and furtive plottings. The wily old Minister thought that the game of corruption was not quite played out, and that if he yielded enough to Fox and Pitt he might still retain the pride of his place. But at last, in the stress of danger, the voice of patriotism was heard; the thing called politics was put roughly aside; and England, which had clamoured for a man, at last saw its call answered.

In other words, the incredible happened: Newcastle resigned. The cities of England began, with one accord, to bestow their freedom upon Pitt. As Walpole said, "it rained gold-boxes." But the unanimous wish of the country was not enough to establish Pitt firmly in office. He could not work without the support of Parliament, and Parliament, ingeniously bought, was still in the power of Newcastle. And

so, to England's shame, Newcastle had to be recalled to the Treasury, and Fox was made Paymaster of the Forces. As Pitt said himself, "I borrowed the Duke of Newcastle's majority to carry on the business of the country." Pitt, indeed, had stooped perforce to conquer. He had thrown to the precious pair of dogs the bone which each liked best. By an act of supreme contempt, having stripped Newcastle of power, he left him the patronage necessary to support his vanity, and to Fox

he gave that opportunity of making money, without which he could not live. As for Pitt, he knew that he could save England, and that no one else could; he brought her some years of shining victory; he built up empires for her in India and in Canada; he changed the very aspect of history; and he proved, incidentally, that if he had left her to be gambled for by Newcastle and the politicians, she would have come down to us stripped and pilled, the simulacrum of a second-rate Power.

CHARLES WHIBLEY.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

BARRICADED IN OFFICE—COMPULSORY PURIFICATION FOR ENGLISH POLITICS—CHARLES PÉGUY, POET AND SOLDIER.

THE attempts of the Government to deal with the register exhibit in their true light its incompetence and tergiversation. It does not want a register, because it does not want a general election, and it has put off by every cunning means in its power the day of registration. Nearly a year ago a new register was promised; then we were assured that the Government was giving the matter its earnest attention; presently the news came that the Cabinet found itself unable, in the multiplicity of its duties, to arrive at a conclusion; and Mr Samuel was put up to propose a Committee, which he did in a speech of unexampled flippancy and bad taste. In a further effort to solve a perfectly soluble problem the Government has failed hopelessly, and Mr Asquith has been content to introduce a measure into the House which he condemns beforehand as "a rough-and-ready makeshift."

It would not be Mr Asquith's were it not a makeshift, and a belated makeshift. Brought in just before the recess, it was arranged to escape a detailed and damaging criticism. According to the usual formula, the House was invited to take

it or leave it, and we are not surprised that its withdrawal has left the country without any kind of register whatever. The scandal is all the greater, because the present House of Commons was elected rather to cut down the Navy and the Army than to conduct a great war, and if representative Government is anything better than a sham, which may be doubted, then the present Parliament is incapable of doing its duty. But that is a question which does not touch Mr Asquith. Apparently it is his purpose to make himself a tenant for life, and he can propose, at decent intervals, a continuance of his own salary and the perpetual payment of £400 a year to each of the gallant six hundred far more easily if no register exists, than if the machinery is ready which might make possible a general election.

He defended his makeshift with the irrelevant adroitness which may always be expected of him. It is impossible, he declares, "at a time like this, with the Government and Parliament preoccupied as they are, to undertake a course of constitutional revision and a general reconsideration of the question of the franchise." Never was a more insincere

argument brought forward. Has Mr Asquith forgotten already, in his hand-to-mouth career, that a few weeks ago he was prepared to relight all the fires of Irish controversy, and to face the conflagration which would surely have broken out, by discussing the dangerous question of Home Rule? Did he then believe a course of constitutional revision impossible? Not he: a brief visit to Dublin, the patting of the Sinn Feiners on the back, convinced him that the middle of a great war was the right and proper moment for "general reconsideration." But he appreciated at their true value the uses to himself and his party of Home Rule, with his Irish supporters left at Westminster their numbers unimpaired, and he sees clearly the disadvantages of an honest register. And, by another stroke of insincerity, he asserts that he could not bring a new class into the electorate without admitting the women to the franchise. The spectacle of Mr Asquith sheltering behind the petticoats of the Suffragettes is not edifying, especially since Mrs Pankhurst herself has confessed that she and her friends have no desire to press their "claim," such as they think it, at this hour of crisis. And, indeed, the enfranchisement of women has nothing to do with the subject, for the plain reason, which Sir Edward Carson pointed out, that men have been enfranchised for a long time and women have not.

So Mr Asquith falls back upon a simple *non possumus*.

He will permit no register to be made which does not exclude the most highly deserving of our citizens—the soldiers and the sailors. He pretends that the difficulties which lie in the path of justice are too great to be surmounted. There are no difficulties which zeal and statesmanship cannot overcome. What prevents the framing of a scheme which shall enable the soldiers and sailors of England to express their opinions? There is still such a thing as a post office, and if the men on the East Coast can mark a voting paper, so also can they who are fighting in the trenches of France. But it is not for us to suggest a plan—that is the business of the Government; and if they insist upon their own helplessness, the sooner they make way for those who can and will do the work, the better will it be for England.

Mr Asquith says that a general election at the present time would be a calamity. Not long since the greatest calamity which he could imagine was a division in his Cabinet. That Mr M'Kinnon Wood or Mr Harcourt should for a moment cease to see "eye to eye" with Mr McKenna or Viscount Grey of Falloden, seemed to our politicians a far greater catastrophe than the retirement from the Dardanelles or the surrender at Kut. Thus we perceive how dangerously the pursuit of politics confuses the vision and mixes up the value of things. There never was a great war that

was not aided by a general election, the only means we have in this country of ousting incompetent, or of expressing confidence in gallant, rulers. That which Pitt suffered willingly in the Napoleonic wars, that which saved us from defeat in the Crimea, is no calamity. The worst calamity that can be dreamed off in a nightmare is that they who have done their best to hinder England in the conduct of the war should be permitted to compromise her at the conference of peace.

Yet although our present governors have shown themselves wholly devoid of initiative at home and abroad, they have been conspicuously successful in barricading themselves against the possibility of eviction. One of their less adroit supporters suggested that Mr Asquith and the House should vote themselves office and salary for the duration of the war and for six months afterwards. Mr Asquith modestly brushed the suggestion aside; he could do no less; and yet we may be sure that he contemplates for himself and his friends no mean term of six months. After the war a hundred problems will demand solution, which Mr Asquith and his friends are incapable of solving. The life of many generations will be at stake, and the conditions of this life shall not be settled by a set of tired demagogues, whose purview of government has always been bounded by the hustings, who by being doctrinaires have saved themselves the

trouble of thought, and who for two years have taken no step that has not been forced upon them. They proclaim themselves the saviours of the country; their revered leader is never tired of comparing himself with Pitt or Wellington or any other great leader whose name is familiar to him; yet he must confess to himself in moments of confidence, if they come to him, that the war has been fought in spite of him. Had it been left to Mr Asquith and Viscount Grey we should not have had enough munitions of war to withstand the German onslaught; cotton would not have been contraband, and the blockade would have been a sorrier farce than it is; no measure of compulsion would have been passed, and the army, which is now our enemies' formidable menace, would not have been called into being. It is true that Mr Asquith has ultimately done what he has been told to do, but he has done it after so many delays, and with so weary a procrastination, that he has always run the risk of being too late, and not seldom has witnessed needless disaster. Now such men as these — Mr Asquith and Viscount Grey — must not be permitted to make peace for England at their own time and upon such terms as appear suitable to their indolence. We were permitted to drift into war unprepared, by the supine apostles of disarmament; we must not allow ourselves to drift into a shameful and inconclusive peace, and

afterwards to fling away the fruits of victory, merely because Mr Asquith thinks, without warrant, that a general election would be a calamity.

It would be a calamity, we hope, to him and his colleagues. To England it would be the dawn of a new and happy day if only those who have saved their country are allowed to have a voice in shaping its future. Mr Asquith and Viscount Grey are profoundly distrusted. We know how wickedly they have mismanaged things during the war. We shall know presently that their interested and criminal carelessness armed Germany for the strife. Ever since Viscount Grey (he was Sir Edward then) pretended to interfere in the affair of Bosnia and Herzegovina, threatening Austria with pains and penalties which he had no power and no intention to inflict, he has gravely bungled the foreign affairs of this realm. He knows little or nothing of the strange countries with which he has had to deal, and he is perplexed in all his business by a humanitarianism which is the sure sign of weakness. In the dark days which preceded the war he was unable to make up his mind, declared openly that he was under no obligation to France, and permitted England to enter the fray only when he discovered that the Radical press spoke for itself and Germany, and that public opinion was firmly set upon preserving England's honour. And he

has not been able to make up his mind since. On cotton, on the blockade, on all important questions, he has been swayed now this way, now that, and he has displayed all the qualities which the plenipotentiaries who some day will hold the fate of England in their hands shall not possess. Therefore, if we can endure the presence of these politicians in the Cabinet during the war, on condition that they withhold their hands from interference, we cannot endure their presence at the peace-making; and if England is to survive as a great nation, some means must be found of getting rid of them.

But, as we have said, they have securely barricaded themselves in office. When Mr Asquith decided upon payment of members, and passed his notorious Parliament Bill, we prophesied in these pages that he would in due course suspend his own Quinquennial Act. It is easy to persuade a majority of 600 politicians, who draw £400 a year, each of them, from the public funds, that the public service cannot do without it, and this majority is an efficient bulwark for an ambitious Minister. But when Mr Asquith devised the Coalition, he defended himself yet more efficiently from the possibility of retirement. The hopes which we cherished of the Coalition at the outset have one and all been doomed to disappointment. We pictured to ourselves a Government which might represent all the thoughts and all the ambitions of England. We dreamed foolishly

that the Unionist members would force the Cabinet to a policy of action, and that the whole nation, with one accord, would unite in the vigorous prosecution of the war. The Navy and the Army have not failed us for an hour, and they will never fail us. The Government, after the Coalition, continued to play the same game of politics as before. The only difference was that there were rather more flies in the spider's web. And now that the Coalition has been made, it presents the strongest possible argument against a general election.

Day by day we are told what will happen after the war, and the wiseacres are busy sketching the new heaven and the new earth which will be called into being. The new heaven and the new earth will doubtless be very like the old, but tired. There is one modest reform which, in the meantime, we should like to suggest. If, as seems likely, we shall go back to the scandal and squalor of democracy, if we pursue once more the craft and mystery of the polling-booth, let us at least do these things with some show of decency. Even if democracy be offensive in itself, its offence can yet be lessened by certain prudent restrictions. To-day we have got into the hands of the Sausage-Seller. There is no reason why we should not retrace our steps, and make the best we can of Pericles. The worst of politics is that those who engage in it look always at the proximate, not at the ultimate, result. The

real purpose of the business, long since thoroughly disguised, is to rule the country with wisdom and justice. In practice, of course, wisdom and justice are completely ruled out, and the poor country totally forgotten. The kind of victory we hear of commonly as won by the politicians is the return of a carpet-bagger, as often as not a disguised alien, by a duped mob of electors. He is returned because he has made promises which he knows, and his dupes ought to know, that he cannot perform. He offers glibly a share of the public funds, he paints an illusive picture of money gained without work, and he defames, without thought or shame, those classes of honest men who happen to be in the minority.

For his dupes we have neither care nor sympathy. Their ignorance puts them beyond the pale of consideration. They are not properly represented, and they do not deserve to be properly represented. They suffer many hardships that they do not wantonly bring upon themselves. The man who lies to them goes into the House of Commons not to serve them, but to increase his foolish position in society, and to improve his chance of sitting upon the boards of doubtful city companies. Dupes and duped, then, are of equal insignificance. But what of the country? How does it profit by this turmoil of falsehood and folly? Whatever happens, it is the victim, and it is not to

protect the voter from chicanery, but to save the country from ruin that we would propose some simple reforms in the machinery of politics.

We hear a vast deal of our free democracy, and we have ceased to be surprised at the effrontery of the epithet. There is no form of freedom which our democracy enjoys. The whole process of sending down some nobody, who has paid his footing, from the Central Office, until he is returned, a triumph of deception, to the House of Commons, is degrading to citizenship. The voter is free to mark a ballot-paper—that is all the liberty he enjoys. He is not free to choose the man to represent him—the choice rests with a mob of wire-pullers. There is no difference between the member for Manchester and the member for Dundee. Interchange them, and no harm will be done to the spirit of locality, for that spirit has long been dead. Indeed, to-day the members of Parliament represent nothing but the cast-iron opinions of a caucus. The old name, Knight of the Shire, has wholly lost its meaning. The chain which once bound the cities and counties to Westminster has been snapped in twain. Briefly, the House of Commons, as a representative assembly, is a sham, and it is characteristic of its falsity that one of the last members returned to it, with the loudly expressed approval of both caucuses, was a man of foreign blood. And this in the midst of the great war.

The first step, then, in the purification of English politics is to abolish the machines. We want to hear no more of secret party funds, with their natural corollary, bought peerages. The whole system of political corruption—organisation is the polite term for it—should be abolished by law. The more or less incompetent gentlemen who sit in London offices and decide the fates of the constituencies should be invited to find some more useful employment. Then the constituencies might recover something of the liberty which once was theirs, and be represented by those who had higher claims to speak for them than are implied in a full pocket and subservience to the machine.

Again, the whole process of electing members of Parliament clamours for revision. We shall not boast a clean and decent Government until we rid ourselves of the trickery universally used to-day in the manufacture of what is called by a fine irony "public opinion." We want to hear no more of the impostures called "publications committees," whose business it is to discover profitable falsehoods and to disseminate them. The leaflets and posters, devised by these committees, sin equally against truth and taste. They might be devised for the amusement of idiots, or for the deception of the untutored savage. And with a fine lack of humour our wire-pullers first tell the people that its voice is the voice of God, and then prove their contempt for God's voice in many

a coarse and vulgar sheet. We shall not easily forget the infamous Chinese poster, which contained no word of truth, and gave the Radical party ten years in which to upset the Constitution and to destroy the very basis of freedom, nor that other masterpiece of pictured effrontery, which represented a dilapidated peer protesting that the poor man ought to pay more for his bread because he did not eat much of it himself. This was a delicate method of preaching the doctrine of Free Trade, a method dishonouring to those who devise it as well as to those for whom it is devised. In brief, let leaflets and posters be suppressed by law, and we shall have a better chance of arriving at the sincere opinion of the people.

One other practice should be sternly abolished—the practice of canvassing. To go from house to house, soliciting, promising, wheedling, lying, is a humiliation which all save the hardened politician would condemn. It serves no purpose, and is only an insult to victim and victimiser alike. And compulsion will be necessary here also, because one side will not renounce the practice so long as the other side deems it profitable. But compulsion is not difficult, and the gain in temper, honesty, and self-respect would be worth the sacrifice of a corrupt and useless habit. Nor should we tolerate the candidature of any one who is not of British birth. We do not want to see our country governed by Germans and

Austrians, Poles and Hungarians. The recurrence of the scandal of Mr Tribitsch-Lincoln, duly congratulated on his magnificent victory by a Cabinet Minister, who had not taken the trouble to discover what manner of man he was, must be made impossible. Darlington deserves to be disfranchised for having imposed a foreign spy upon the House of Commons, and we imagine that even Viscount Grey of Falloden, hardened as he is in the practice of politics, feels a twinge of conscience when he hears the name of the convict, lately a welcome colleague.

Democracy is on its trial, and must purge itself of the sins we have set forth, if it is not to fall a ready victim to a wholesome reaction. Unless we put an end to the public corruption which now exists, and which is far worse than the old-fashioned genial corruption of sovereigns and pots of ale, we cannot hope to see our Empire honourably governed. Nor need the financial question trouble us. The money which is needed to defray the necessary expenses of an election should be found by the constituencies themselves, and the sum which the candidate would be asked to spend himself would be trivial indeed, if he were permitted only to issue a single address and to explain his views to the electors upon a public platform. At any rate here are the mere beginnings of electoral reform, which are the more loudly called for because the Corrupt Practices Act has

been cunningly evaded, and far worse deceits have been encouraged since its passage than any of those which it was designed to suppress.

The war, which has changed the face of all things, has above all turned words into deeds. Before 1914 hundreds were writing history who are now engaged in the nobler task of making it. The day is not far off when the rôles will be reversed, and as yet we have no glimmering of the man of genius who shall set down for all time in due and seemly sequence the portentous events of the last two years. We may be sure that we shall look beyond the circle of the official historians for the final record. We may buy guns and shells and uniforms, if we have money enough; we cannot buy words fit for immortality. Something more is needed for an imperishable history than the truth. We ask also the artistic sense, which shall set the truth in a white and living light. So far we have been given fragments only—a sketch here, a picture there—which reveal to us what has happened in a single corner of the field. And, as we should have expected, so far the French have the best of it. The English mind works more slowly than the French; the English eye, clearly as it sees at last, picks up the essentials of a scene less deftly. Yet the vision

and the intelligence of both nations are already at work, and the mass of printed material, much of it authentic, grows hourly.

Some months ago M. Charles le Goffic showed in his 'Dixmude' with how much skill a practised hand could turn the records of others into a consistent narrative; and now M. Victor Boudon, with a greater skill, has set upon paper what he has seen himself in Lorraine and at the Marne.¹ The progress of the campaign was in a sense accidental to M. Boudon's purpose. What he wished to do above all was to sketch the character of Charles Péguy, as he studied it in the long and bitter retreat from Arman-court to the very gates of Paris. And than Charles Péguy he could not find a better hero for his vivid pages. This lieutenant of forty years, who died a gallant death in the first hour of France's victory, deserves whatever meed of praise can be given him. When the war broke out he was a poet, who did not despise the movements of his time. He threw himself with energy into practical affairs, and played his part worthily on the soiled stage of politics. He owed allegiance to none; he subscribed to the narrow gospel of no party. His socialism did not obscure his devotion to the Church; he kept his mind open to all impressions of what

¹ Avec Charles Péguy de la Lorraine à la Marne, par Victor Boudon. Paris: Librairie Hachette.

he thought the truth, and was determined in the conflict of opinions to be himself. He was what we, following the example of France, call an "intellectual." Yet how far different was he from those who bear the title in England! Had he been an Englishman, perhaps he might have belonged to that nursery of traitors, the Union of Democratic Control; he might have exercised his wits in finding excuses for German brutality; he might have thought it a mark of moral "superiority" to profess a sympathy with his country's enemies. But he was a Frenchman and a poet, and his way lay clear before him. He joined the army at once, with the enthusiasm inspired by a great cause, and never once did he falter in the confidence which he felt of victory. He contemplated the single-mindedness of Paris with pride. "He who has not seen Paris to-day and yesterday," he wrote on August 3, 1914, "has seen nothing." Three days later he was on his way to invade Lorraine, a lieutenant in command of the 19th company of the 276th regiment of infantry, and as lieutenant of the same company he died on September 5 at Villeray, marking as he fell the limits which the German avalanche should not pass.

Though Charles Péguy had spent many years in writing poetry, and in editing his famous 'Cahiers de la Quinzaine,' he proved instantly that the army was his true vocation. The soldier who said that for a lieutenant he was a *chic type*

gave him the last word of praise. Through all the weeks which he spent in an ill-understood retreat, he preserved his own courage and kept up the spirits of his men as only a born soldier could do. Tireless in marching, always at the head of his company, he shamed the stragglers to fresh efforts. All his men knew that he asked them to do only what he did himself, and thus they bore fatigue and even starvation with a gallantry equal to their gallant lieutenant's.

His spirit of justice, his paternal firmness, says M. Boudon, instantly conquered the affection of his men. They knew him not for a poet, and yet, as if in acknowledgment of his grave superiority over them, nicknamed him the *Pion*, or schoolmaster. The vibrant and even metallic tones of his voice were heard from one end of the company to the other, urging his men to the march. "Come, come, my friends," he would say, "a little more collar work, and we are there." Once when his company, reduced from 250 to 30, was retreating from Saint-Aubin, Péguy in despair gave them a quarter of an hour's rest, and when the time came for them to march again he found them unwilling to budge. "Come, the 19th," he cried, "to your feet." Some of them hardly moved, and then a voice was heard saying, in the straggly accent of the faubourg, "there is no longer any 19th." "Ah! you think that, do you?" replied Péguy; "well, my friend, as long as I am here, there will

be a 19th." And in an instant all that were left sprang to their feet, and happily took the road again.

Charles Péguy, then, was a true Frenchman, both in courage and sentiment, and his brief career remains for ever an example and an incentive. That there have been Péguy's, too, in our army, we may say without boasting. The bravery and cheerfulness of our soldiers, not trained to war from their youth up, may well fill us with pride and confidence. We, too, have seen poets fall upon the field of battle, and have learned that they die not in vain who die for their Fatherland. And this plain record of Péguy is something more than the record of a hero. M. Boudon, in composing the eulogy of his leader, has also sketched very clearly a strange aspect of modern warfare. Throughout the few weeks of which M. Boudon writes, the French soldiers were fighting in the dark. They knew not where they were going nor why. They saw nothing but the white road before them, and they understood the purpose of the advance, when they went forward, as little as the purpose of the retreat, when they went back. They were in the

midst of the fighting, and what they suffered from acutely—and Péguy himself more than all—was the lack of news. They did their best to pick up a journal now and then, with the zest and curiosity of the poor creatures destined to stay at home. Above all, the sudden flight towards Paris perplexed them. "We are betrayed," cried one soldier. "Imbecile," answered Péguy, "you have no right to say that word; you have no right to think it." So, in ignorance and complete trust of the high command, the French army retreated upon Paris, without rest, without food, and harassed always by the following Germans. In three days and nights it covered 150 kilometres, a feat made more difficult and painful by the great heat and by the lack of sleep and bread. That they achieved what they did, not knowing why they did it, is the glory of the French soldiers. It is the glory also of our small expeditionary force, which retreated and fought not far from the French. And when the history of the war comes to be written, one page at least will be consecrated, we are sure, to the courage of Charles Péguy and his gallant 19th.

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BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON.

I.

ON either side rise belts of tall date-palms, their feathery branches just astir in the lazy breeze, their tops green-gold in the morning sunlight; between the palms, broad and still, and blue as the sky above, stretches the river up which we are steaming—the Euphrates, the Waters of Babylon.

It is the first hour of the dawn, and as yet the world does not seem quite awake: a stillness, broken only by the regular thrash of the stern-wheel, broods over the scene and accentuates the beauty of it—the clearness of the sky, the bright sunlight, the shimmering blue water: it seems hardly possible under such conditions that we are on our way to a "scrap."

But we, an insignificant and strangely mixed force, on two or three small dirty stern-wheel river steamers, are out to interrupt all this; to break

the brooding silence, to begrime with smoke those blue, untroubled waters; to thrust ourselves rudely upon this Arcadian peace, and to make matters very unpleasant—for some one. In short, we are going to live up to our reputation and be energetic, twentieth-century, and just, in a land where energy is a vice, the twentieth century still a matter of the dim and far-off future, and justice an unknown quantity. We may expect to jar on our surroundings.

However, as things turned out finally, this expectation was not completely fulfilled, and to a great extent we remained in our twentieth-century isolation, while "the affair" was carried through more in accordance with the customs and conventions that exist by the Waters of Babylon.

The situation and *dramatis*

personæ are as follows: Sheikh Aziud, friendly to the British; his neighbour, Majnún, guilty of acts of hostility towards the new power; Aziud and Majnún are enemies of old standing.

Majnún's guilt having been established, Aziud has secured our co-operation in order to give his old enemy a thrashing; and so two birds will be killed with one stone. Majnún will be taught how to behave, and Aziud shown that the British Raj is an upholder of the well-disposed.

We had steamed about ten miles up the winding river when we rounded a bend and met the army of our ally, drawn up to receive us. It was a strange and wonderful sight. The first impression was of many and shifting colours, and a far-off indistinct ripple of sound which hardly broke the stillness. As we drew nearer the sound increased to a deep buzz of talking, with here and there the clearer note of a shout, short and sharp as a fox's bark. The colours divided themselves into two sections: first, in a long line beside the river bank were crowded two or three hundred little black canoes—the *māshoofs* of the country; in each of these were two or three men, "marsh" Arabs dressed in strange sack-like patched garments, rusty red, brown and dull green, while others wore the long and voluminous "abba," striped blue, or yellow, and white and blue "kefieh" and "aggal." The former is a square cotton handkerchief (made in Manchester), folded in a triangular shape

over the head, and kept in place by the latter, a twisted loop of black wool or camel's hair.

Behind the men in the boats rose a second tier of shifting colour, formed by a crowd upon the banks; and above all, the silver tops of their poles glittering in the sun, flapped and sagged great silken banners, green and white, and many bearing the white star and crescent.

As we drew in near the bank and dropped anchor a hush fell upon the crowd: almost immediately out shot a long black *māsheef* poled by negroes, gorgeously carpeted, coolly awned—the "state-barge" of Sheikh Aziud. Having made fast to the gunboat the Sheikh climbed on board to interview the Officer Commanding: and so the two allied commanders, British and Arabian, met to discuss the situation, while side by side the White Ensign and the Star and Crescent were reflected in the waters of the Euphrates.

With little delay the plan was explained. Majnún's village, which was to be attacked, lay in the marshes some two miles up a creek: very good—our friend's army would proceed up the creek in its fleet and surround the village. Then one of our gunboats with fifty men, two 3-pounders and a maxim, would appear upon the scene as moral support, and thus encourage Majnún to submit to terms: it was all quite simple.

A start was to be made im-

mediately, so the Sheikh once more clambered into his state-berge, and was soon lost to sight among the crowd of other boats. Now followed a period of confused uproar: words of command, bellowings of religious ecstasy, shouting, singing, and much brandishing of banners and rifles—all entered into with such enthusiasm and *abandon* that we wondered despairingly how long the performance would last: however, quite suddenly, and apparently without any definite word of command or signal, they got a move on. In a cloud the boats shot out into the stream, the crews paddling with short quick strokes that made a strange sobbing noise: the red and green banners floated out like wings above the black shapes, and the coloured forms swayed and swung above the water.

There were sudden flashes, as the sun caught the silver-studded stock of a rifle, or the top of a flag-pole, and the glittering paddles gleamed as they turned.

In a bunch the boats made for the mouth of the creek, and as they gradually drew away from us this strange fleet looked for all the world like some crowd of great gorgeous butterflies hovering over the blue water: as we watched, they turned into the creek and were lost from view.

For two weary hours we waited; the little breeze that there had been earlier died away, and the sun climbed higher into hard blue sky; the landscape took on a harsh

photographic aspect, and here and there the air quivered and shimmered in the heat.

But at last it was considered that our Sheikh's troops had had time enough to accomplish their object, and so the word was given for a move: the stern-wheel thrashed the water in spasmodic bursts, and slowly we turned into the creek.

It was some 30 yards wide, bordered with the eternal date-palms, the water beautifully clear and about 6 feet deep: this was ample for our shallow-draft boat, but the great yellow-blossomed water-lilies with which the creek was covered made our progress slow, and it must have been nearly an hour before we arrived at our destination.

And when we did arrive we found that "some one had blundered"; for there, in front of the village, instead of surrounding it as we had ordered, was gathered the butterfly fleet—peacefully resting in the sun.

Truth to tell, these Arabs are not very enthusiastic or energetic warriors; and Aziud no doubt had argued that it would be less dangerous to make a "demonstration," to publish the coming of our ship of war, and thoroughly frighten the enemy, while at the same time putting no obstacle in the way of his retirement, and then to wade in for ever-welcome loot from a deserted village.

Inquiries soon elicited the fact that the enemy were, in the picturesque metaphor of the country, "in the midst of the heavens,"—that is, had run

for it; and that our friends were only waiting for our arrival to go in and do their valiant work of burning and looting.

All chance of capturing Majnún was of course lost, for our steamer could not follow over the shallow floods and marshes; however, he certainly could be "got at" by burning and looting his village.

So the word was given. With a loud yell the boats once more started off; banners flying, paddles and poles and rifles flashing in the sun, the butterfly army departed, dodging and flitting among the palm-trees that rose above the floods.

However, some of Majnún's men must have remained to defend hearth and home, for soon we could hear quite heavy rifle-fire from the trees—the deep "plump" of the old martinis and the sharper "plock-plock" of a few mausers. Standing on the top of the deck-house we could see something of the battle and watched our friends dashing about in their little boats. Suddenly a man would jump up—though the boat was rocking and being poled at full speed—there would be a flash, a great puff of blue smoke, then another and another; everywhere were men jumping up and shooting, everywhere little black boats scudding over the water—a confused din of yells and shouts and reports.

Exciting work while it lasted, but it was soon over; great black clouds of smoke from the trees which hid the village rolled lazily into the blue sky,

and the noise of the battle died away. Then clear and piercing upon the sudden silence we heard the wailing of the women—a terrible trembling cry repeated again and again on the same note, beginning and ending suddenly like the cry of an animal.

Soon the victorious army began to return—in each boat the loot was piled high: in some a cow or sheep, in others jars of grain, brass vessels, a few bandoliers full of great clumsy martini ammunition, here and there a rifle—but no one came away empty. Sheikh Aziud came on board, silent and grave, and betraying no sign of pleasure or excitement on his handsome old face: he came and shook hands with each officer in turn, while he was complimented in flowery language by our Persian interpreter on the success of his army and the excellence of his tactics. He was more silent than most of the Arabs of this part, and very plainly dressed in a long pure white "abba" and blue silk "kefieh," while his only ornament was a large and very beautiful turquoise ring.

With him he brought three wounded men to be patched up by our assistant-surgeon, and a following of awful cut-throats—perhaps the staff. But they were a picturesque crowd, armed with "Muscat Martinis," lavishly decorated with silver wire and inlaid with rough turquoise: one sportsman had removed his fore-sight and stuck on a large turquoise in its place: all of

them had curved daggers, variously ornamented, and one a great broad-bladed sword with an ivory and silver hilt.

After the long and windy compliments had been returned by Aziud, and he had been presented with a present of tinned mackerel, chutney, and mixed pickles, with which he appeared delighted, the allied armies parted.

The one, noisy with shouts and laughter, gay with many colours, flitted away over the

marshes; the other, with puffs, snorts, and clouds of noisome smoke, plodded off down the lily-covered creek to the open waters of the river. We headed down-stream, bound for camp and the twentieth century; behind us we left the palms, their feathery branches clear-cut against a golden sky, and with us we took many memories: not least among them was the sound of weeping heard by the Waters of Babylon.

II.

It was a night at the end of May, and the beginning of summer in the valley of the Tigris: there was no wind, and the hot atmosphere seemed almost tangible, like so much damp cotton wool, though overhead the stars blazed in the black sky and were clearly reflected in the still waters of the creek. Behind through the trunks of palm-trees the rim of the rising moon could be seen, and beyond the trees the red, muddy Tigris was flowing swiftly and silently, to join a little farther down with the waters of the Euphrates, into which the creek opened.

Beside the creek the stillness was only broken by the occasional ripple of the water against a small pier, and now and then by a rustle or perhaps an inarticulate murmur from the long lines of dark shadows stretched out on the earth: and over all and through all sounded the faint and shrill accompaniment of the swarms

of mosquitoes. Presently the moon rose above the palm-trees and cast a bright metallic light over the ghostly scene, turning the creek into a band of oily black and silver. On the near bank the lines of dark shadows appeared more clearly now as prostrate ranks of khaki-clad men, their helmets on the ground beside them: a battalion of infantry asleep on the water's edge, with here and there the motionless erect figures of sentries.

Close up to the bank, half-aground, was a long line of large canoe-like boats with curled and carved prows, and on the shore by each few boats lay a heap of long poles: looking up the creek beyond the boats the moon shone upon what appeared to be miles of open water the colour of polished steel.

Gradually the night passed, hot and still and breathless, and as the moon began to wane busy forms appeared among the

sleepers, and soon the bank of the creek was alive with men, formed up and silent: two small black canoes laden with poles pushed off from the rickety pier and disappeared up the creek towards the floods ahead.

There was little noise as the men filed into the long boats—eight men to a boat: here and there a rifle knocked against the gunwale or a pole fell with a splash; but soon all the boats were full and cast off, the puntsmen, one in the bows and one in the stern, took their places, and in single file the boats threaded their way up the creek towards the open water beyond.

By now it was twilight, and the marshes could be dimly made out ahead, the thicker patches of reeds showing up like masses of dark shadows: in front was a straggling line of flags, some red and some white, the work of the two little black canoes, and by these the long line of boats directed their course, keeping the white flags on their right and the red on their left: perhaps some in the boats, albeit with a suspicion of the incongruity of it, could not help thinking of the green fields and the flagged fences of their last point-to-point at home!

Now that it was grown lighter something more could be seen of this strange force and its fleet. The force was an Indian Brigade—one British regiment and three Native—and the fleet was composed of some 250 of the local boats in use in this part of the world—

“bellums”—30 feet long, and sturdily built canoes with a beam of 4 feet or so: some of the boats were armoured with steel plates placed at right angles across the thwarts and projecting over the water on each side—heavy and lumbering water-beetles.

There were other craft too emerging from the mouth of the creek now, strange and unwieldy floating huts of reeds that came slowly over the water; but under the thatch of reeds was strong steel plating, and behind the steel plating a platform built across two boats—and thus the M.G.'s and Mountain Guns were also to sojourn upon the face of the waters.

Gradually the lines of boats, like so many brown sea-serpents, wound across the marsh, making for a red flag 1200 yards away, and then they spread out into a long line prow level with prow: the line lengthened and a line behind was formed, and the reed-huts too lumbered up and came to a standstill.

The waters of the marsh were turning from grey through all shades of intense blue, and on every side the vivid green of the young reeds shaded the blue till in the distance it appeared as a vast waving field of green stretching to the horizon: overhead the sky was very dark blue, but the last star had gone and the horizon grown pale, and already away to the east pink had changed to apricot colour, and then again to bright gold, and soon the sun would rise.

An extraordinary stillness brooded over this scene of water and sky: high up overhead flew a flock of pelicans, their white plumage tinged with pink in the dawn, looking very like some huge blossoms drifting through the air; in a boat near by a jemadar stood up, and began whispering to his men excitedly—his “pug-garee” and the dark face beneath it silhouetted clearly against the golden background to the East; over the water came the sound of some one giving orders in an undertone from the staff-boat.

Suddenly the sun shot up above the level horizon: the magic colours faded from the sky, and the marsh turned to a hard, metallic blue, splashed with blatant green: day had come.

And just as suddenly the peace and stillness was broken: away to the right, from a clump of palm-trees at the edge of the marsh, came four hollow booms in quick succession, and the storm broke. Beyond the palms, from the Tigris, gunboats took up the tale; from behind, the guns from camp repeated it, and down at the mouth of the creek more gunboats crashed and shook upon the blue Euphrates. Over the heads of the men in the boats the air was alive with the crack and shattering rattle of the 5-inch and 4·7 shells, and 2000 yards beyond, from an island in the marsh, rose up a great cloud of smoke and dust, like a dirty smudge against the pure blue sky.

Still the boats remained in

their two long lines, though some of the reed-huts had moved slowly out to the left: here and there could be seen a form standing up, watching through glasses, above the waving tops of the reeds.

But soon the order for an advance came, and slowly the line got under way: from a distance only the two punters of each boat appeared, the other men and the boats themselves just hidden by the reeds, which were about three feet high, and through which the boats slipped easily.

After some time the heavy guns lifted from their first target, the island against which the boats were now moving, on to another small hillock a few hundred yards behind; but now came the chance for the mountain guns in their reed-huts, which had pulled out clear of the line, and they opened fire to support the boats, giving a perceptible “kick” in the water at each discharge, and barking away furiously.

Slowly the first line of boats made towards the island, where now the line of the enemy's trenches could be seen some fifty yards from the water: the little shells from the mountain guns were bursting in white puffs above it, but after the tremendous plastering from the heavies it seemed that there could be nothing left alive on the 500 square yards of blasted sand and mud.

The boats were within 300 yards when a ripple of grey puffs ran along the crest of the hillock and the

crackle of musketry rang out, the bullets hitting the water with a loud smack and ripping through the reeds; but the boats came on, and on their left two of the huts could be seen being punted furiously forward, and soon the fevered stuttering of two machine-guns joined the general pandemonium.

Within 50 yards of the island the boats grounded, and the men jumped out and splashed through the water and mud towards the trenches. Here and there one fell; but immediately, in a dark wave lit by the flashing points of the bayonets, they seethed up the dun-coloured slope and over the crest, and the first position was won.

Of the defenders there remained some 80 shell-torn bodies and about 20 men alive, Kurds and Arabs—the former tall, big-boned men in long cotton shirts, some with thick felt jackets and felt skull-caps. Around lay a confused mass of broken rifles, empty cartridge-cases, blood-stained clothes, and broken earthenware drinking-pots.

These were brave men. Of the 20 remaining alive half were wounded; and they were soon being dealt with by a doctor and orderlies, who dressed their wounds, while the men themselves watched their shattered limbs being bound up without the flicker of an eyelid, never a sound escaping from them: their only request was for water and shade from the blazing sun. In the mean-

time two farther positions— islands like the first—had been heavily bombarded, and the second line of boats had effected a landing with little loss, and captured them together with their garrisons. On the farther island—a long, low sandbank, whose left flank extended almost to the Tigris—the biggest captures were made: these consisted of 130 prisoners, two guns with ammunition, and a considerable amount of rifles and small-arms ammunition. The gun emplacements were just below the crest, and on the reverse slope were dug well-protected galleries roofed with boards and filled with straw, and from these the reluctant garrison was coaxed. In rear of the position ran a long insulated cable connected with observation mines in the river and on the marshes, but luckily these had failed to explode.

Troops were turned on to collect the spoils of war and to herd the prisoners together on to one island, where they could be safely kept under guard until their transfer to ships could be managed. They were a strange heterogeneous collection—Kurds and Arabs, filthy and clad in rags, with an utterly tired and "sick-of-it-all" expression; a few Turks in khaki, one or two officers in blue uniforms and out-at-the-toes long-boots, silent and suspicious, but, it seemed, very glad that as far as they were concerned it was all over. They had lived in this waste of mud and reeds for three months—by day there was

never a blade of shade and the blazing sun beat down on their patch of dry mud and the glassy water round them, by night the dank mists rolled over the marshes and the mosquitoes swarmed from every stagnant pool. Fever and ague, glare, and hunger and thirst, three months of it, ended by an hour of 5-inch lyddite and whining shrapnel—no wonder that they were glad to be done with war!

By now it was early afternoon: round the three captured positions the boats were gathered, and their crews looked in vain for some shade from the fierce sun: a ground-sheet stretched on four punt poles was the best that could be done, but small comfort. The three islands captured formed the enemy's advanced positions—there were farther strong defences beyond on either side of the river, but much hard work had been done since the first boats wound from the creek before dawn, and now with the sun at its fiercest further operations were postponed till the morrow.

Though fighting for the day was over, work was not: rations and ammunition

—every ounce—had to be brought by boat from the river across to these islands in the marsh: wounded and sick—there were many with “sun” after this day's work—had to be transported, also the prisoners, and the dead had to be buried: orders had to be got out and delivered to the troops, split up into small groups upon every mud-heap in the marsh that was dry—or almost dry: and it all took time. But the sun at last ceased to blaze upon the water and dropped like a lazy golden ball into the Western marsh; the waters grew dark-blue again, then grey, then black; the sky deepened to the softest violet and blazed with the great flashing stars, and the stillness which is their own fell over the marshes.

Upon the muddy shores of the islands sprawled the forms of soldiers sleeping beside their boats: now and then sounded the hoarse croak of some night bird or the beat of hurrying wings high up against the stars, and ever the incessant low murmur of the river: only the restless yellow eye of the signallers' lamp winked rumours of the wrath to come.

LIGHT INFANTRY.

A SIDE ISSUE OF THE WAR.

ON Saturday morning, January 30, 1915, a telephone message came through to me from Craig's Court, County of London Red Cross Association's Headquarters. It informed me, erroneously as it afterwards transpired, that enteric fever had broken out among the civil population in Boulogne, and inquired if I was willing to proceed to France with a V.A.D. Unit, which was shortly leaving for service in a hospital recently opened by the British authorities to receive these cases. I agreed. The next day was spent in filling up the necessary forms, applying for passport, sitting for the required photographs, &c. Monday began with an orgy of shopping—rudely interrupted by another message to the effect that the entire expedition was "off"—for reasons unassigned. Language—plus the countermanding of a Wolseley valise, the most serious item on the list—ensued. The minor purchases were allowed to stand, on the supposition that they would be wanted at any rate before that dim far-away date, "when the war is over." Tuesday morning brought a new order. "Start to-morrow." The valise was re-ordered, the broken threads of shopping renewed, the bags packed, and I hurriedly dressed on Wednesday in preparation for an early start. Once more to 83 Pall Mall, this time to sign a contract binding

me for six months' service—a slight shock, as I had expected it to be three. I studied its provisions hastily. They included a promise on the part of the British Red Cross Society to feed and transport me during my term of service; in return I vowed unquestioning obedience and uncomplaining acceptance of dismissal (fare home unpaid) in case of misconduct on my part. This appeared to be insisted on in several places, but I may have been reading treble in the excitement of the moment. Finally, the document stated that anything we said or sang was liable to be nullified at the pleasure of the Naval and Military Authorities, and requested me not to write for the Press, and to swear myself the loyal subject of His Majesty King George.

I signed in about six places, and was swept into an adjoining chamber, to be given a brassard, a certificate of identity, and a disc graven with my name. The correct filling up of the certificate involved providing the authorities with a description of my personal appearance—down to the shoulders—and a declaration of my "apparent age," for which, after a hurried consultation with fellow-victims, I decided to substitute my real one. This had to be countersigned by a "competent military officer"; in this case a member of the medical profession, who talked and wrote with amazing de-

liberation, considering that it was now past 11 A.M., and we were due at Victoria Station at 12, while our baggage had to be fetched in the interim.

Thanks to a swift taxi, however, I arrived at the station punctually. There were now collected twelve members of various Red Cross V.A. Detachments, and an equal number of women belonging to detachments of the St John's Ambulance Association. Mrs F——, one of the most influential members of the V.A.D. Selection Board, appeared on the scene, with the stupefying intelligence that she had received yet another telegram, forbidding us to start! The members of the St John's detachments were compelled to go sadly home, but Mrs F—— decided that the Red Cross contingent should, at all events, cross to Boulogne, where, if their services were refused for the enteric hospital, they might at least take turns in relieving members of No. 1 V.A.D. Unit, who had been in charge of a Rest Station since August 1914. A written order from the B.R.C.S. exempted us from more than the most perfunctory examination of our persons and baggage, and we at length took our places in the train for Folkestone. As the train steamed out of the station our spirits rose. My detachment wore brass buttons on their uniforms. These had to be changed, for foreign service, to black ones. This task I accomplished during the journey, with the assistance of K. M. S——, hereinafter termed

the "Sergeant-Major," though she did not earn the title till some weeks later. Even so, one forgotten brazen button lurked on the strap at the back of my overcoat, to be pointed out with derision on board the Boulogne boat. The crossing was comparatively calm. Before landing, our passports, &c., were examined by two officials, English and French. The latter wished to describe us as "*Femmes Militaires*"—a suggestion that was promptly vetoed by the Englishman, probably an Anti-Suffragist!

On the quay we were welcomed by members of No. 1 Unit, and informed that we were to go to the Hotel Christol, where we should be provided with beds and dinner and all luxuries of civilisation. We were pleased, but endeavoured to appear indifferent to creature comforts—a mistake only raw campaigners would have made. The dinner was excellent, though served in a room which had no communication with the outer air, and whose somewhat stale atmosphere was harassed unavailingly by the whirling of an electric fan. The Hotel Christol had been a hospital for some months, and was now undergoing a transformation into Nurses' Headquarters, where English Sisters could stay on their way out or home, or between their terms of service at different hospitals. Consequently the building was in a state of chaos. There was no lack of furniture, but it was chiefly congregated in the

corridors; while the Red Cross Orderlies responsible for "moving in" were usually to be found reclining on sofas or arm-chairs on the landings, thinking perhaps deeply, but acting not at all.

I was one of six V.A.D.'s who occupied two rooms opening into each other at the far end of a passage. Three hailed from Sussex, and had been previously acquainted. They took possession of one room, while the rest of us—who happened all to live in London, but had not met before this expedition was mooted—settled ourselves in the other. We thought our quarters cramped, and made delicate use of screens, &c. We little knew what was coming.

Our future prospects remained shrouded in mystery. We had heard by this time that the enteric hospital was not at Boulogne, but at St Omer—the Headquarters of the British Expeditionary Force in France. It was considered doubtful if we, not being certificated nurses, would be allowed to go there. We were therefore wild to do so in any capacity, even the humblest. It was said that Sir Arthur Sloggett, Director-General of Medical Services, desired to send us, but that there was strong opposition—though where this came from I never very clearly knew, and it did not affect the ultimate issue.

Waiting for further orders, we found at first sufficient occupation in studying Boulogne under war conditions.

Far as we were from the fighting line, there was a certain thrill in the knowledge that we were actually in a country invaded by the enemy. Our sitting-room windows overlooked the harbour. Crossing and re-crossing the cobbled bridge below us was an endless procession of soldiers—blue and khaki,—motor ambulance cars, transport waggons, lorries, sailors, women in shawls, women bareheaded, women in stiff caps, children, military police—there was no lack of variety in the spectacle. Two magnificent Hospital Ships—converted liners—painted in long lines of green and white, with huge red crosses gleaming on their sides, lay in harbour ready to start for England. The town, of course, was full of wounded after any heavy fighting, and every hotel, as well as the fine Casino, had become a hospital.

Sometimes we helped at the Rest Station organised by No. 1 V.A.D. Unit. It consisted of railway trucks which their own work had converted into kitchen, storehouse, dispensary, and staff-room—the last being also the quartermaster's office.

The work had been heavy at the beginning of the war, when train-loads of wounded arrived unfed, and were left on stretchers on the station platforms awaiting transport to ship or hospital. With the improvement of the Ambulance Train and Car service, there became less apparent need of the Rest Station's supply of hot drinks, cigarettes, &c. None the less, these offerings

were still welcomed in many cases, not only by the wounded, but by railway officials on night duty, who were thankful for refreshment during the cold of winter.

It was on February 11, after a week of contradictory rumours, and the growth within us all of restless irritation, that orders at last came that we were to proceed to St Omer. One of our number had, in the meantime, been recalled by bad news from home, another elected to stay behind and do quartermaster's work at the Rest Station. To make up the original twelve, Mrs W—— and Miss L—— from No. 1 Unit joined us. We were drawn up in line in the hall of the Hotel Christol to listen to a valedictory speech from the English Commissioner at Boulogne. Poor dear! I shall never forget his embarrassment as he groped in verbal darkness while we stood at gaze. All I remember of his speech is the remark, "You will find things very rough up there," which was a fairly accurate prophecy; and a somewhat abrupt recommendation to the care of the Almighty, with which his observations concluded.

Our conveyance duly arrived, a motor-omnibus of the station variety, and we waited impatiently to start, but new passes had to be made out, as we were now about to enter the War Zone.

We left Boulogne at last in brilliant sunshine, and ran for St Omer. We saw many Belgian soldiers in the villages,

some of whom saluted, while the women and children cheered and waved their hands to us. We drove rapidly, and the roads were bad. Twice the car seemed actually to leap the rails at a level crossing, and we were hurled from our seats.

By the time we reached St Omer, it was dark and very cold. The town was well lit, however, and we speculated wildly as to where Sir John French might reside. But the car left streets behind and plunged once more into the country. After a run of about a mile and a half it drew up in a muddy lane in front of a high white wall.

A door in this wall opened to admit us into a garden, wherein we dimly saw a long building. This was our mess—it also housed the Matron, several Sisters, and later our V.A.D. cook and mess orderly.

The first room we entered was a potting-shed in normal times; it was long and lofty, with a tiled floor and many windows. In our time part of it was used as a Sisters' dormitory and the rest for drying clothes! The cold thereof was intense.

Thence we proceeded to the dining-room, cheerful with electric light on all evenings when a Taube or Zeppelin scare did not plunge us into unforeseen darkness. We sat down to the mixed meal, half tea, half dinner, well known to the nursing profession.

Miss H——, the Matron, a slim woman with a decisive manner and a pleasing smile, welcomed us with a promise of

much work. We were told, however, that on our first morning we need not appear until second breakfast, served at 8.15 A.M., and intended as a rule only for Matron and Sisters on night duty.

Miss E——, Home Sister, armed with a lantern, then drew us forth into the muddy dark to find our billet. This, as the crow flies, was not far distant. But there was no opening in the garden fence by which we might proceed thither in a straight line, consequently we were compelled to go round the house by road—a good ten minutes' trudge. Our baggage followed us in the motor. We left the road for a path running alongside a ploughed field, which led us to another walled garden that belonged to our lodging. Up a narrow cottage stair, lit only by the lantern we carried, we dragged our belongings with some effort. The V.A.D. quarters consisted of three rooms leading from the first landing, and having no other means of entrance or exit.

They occupied the whole width of the building, some ten feet merely, and had windows on each side, though only those facing west would open. The first room was the largest, oblong in shape, the second was square, the last a tiny slip of an apartment just capable of accommodating two recumbent figures and a chair or so. The two large rooms boasted each a cupboard in the wall, and a table; otherwise they were entirely destitute of furniture. The floors consisted of

bare boards, mercifully clean. Some one declared these quarters could be made charming, with the enthusiasm of a new-wed bride starting life in a suburban villa. I felt tired and sceptical. We were given Army blankets of that all-absorbing sepia hue beloved of military authorities, and promised mattresses—some other time. I, with four others who had shared rooms at the Hotel Christol, lay down in the second room, rolled up in our valises and everything else we could think of to keep out the draughts which played mad, happy games on the floor, stabbing us remorselessly *en route*.

G—— had no valise, so S—— lent her sleeping-bag, an act of unselfishness which one must have shivered on that floor to appreciate at its true value. I awoke in the dead of night to find that S—— and I were close together. Instinctively I moved away, but slipped back when I heard a shuddering voice in the darkness saying, "Please don't, it's the first time I've been warm to-night."

Now that I have described our billet in some detail, I will explain how we eventually settled down in it, since it was to be our home for two and a half months. Two of our Unit moved into the other house, where they acted as cook and orderly to our mess. This relieved our "congested district," and left only four to sleep in the central apartment. First, S—— (the "Sergeant-Major," now christened thus on account of

the rigid system she introduced into our washing and dressing arrangements, and the tidiness on which she, more or less successfully, insisted). Secondly (I am counting in the order in which we lay at night, beginning from the door), came myself. Next C——, a sweet-tempered and casual person, whose retention of good manners, long after our scrambling, primitive life had robbed the rest of us of any such attribute, earned her the nickname of "The Perfect Lady." Lastly, tucked neatly into the corner, where she could listen to a gnawing rat if she were wakeful, lay W—— (or the "Tit Willow"), who was small but sophisticated, and had a great deal of hair, and eyes which toned with her pyjamas when it happened to be her week for the blue pair.

We acquired by degrees four chairs; four basins, folding, indiarubber, as an Army Stores list would have described them; and three mattresses. The latter we arranged to accommodate the four of us, by placing two transversely, and one in the ordinary manner, between the door of the tiny inner room and the west wall. Sometimes the mattresses let us down, literally, by slipping apart, and great were the gymnastics required to replace them without rising—which no one desired to do when once well swaddled in blankets. We lay with our heads against the thin partition dividing us from the inner room, and we could hear its occupants, who were piously disposed, read the Bible

aloud ere they slept. They, on their side, were probably less edified by the ribald tales with which our quartette, or rather three-fourths of it, for "The Perfect Lady" seldom contributed, were wont to cheer the comfortless and chilly evenings.

The dressing of four women in that confined space in the darkness of the early winter mornings was no easy matter. Men, untrammelled by long hair, caps, overalls and aprons to be worn, as far as possible, unsullied through mud and rain, will not appreciate this statement, but perhaps will take our united word for its truth. All you desired to wear in the morning was placed on your chair overnight. Then you plucked and manipulated your clothes, by the wavering light of one bottled candle, till the chair was bare and you covered and ready to waddle out to breakfast in snow- or gum-boots, long coats, and sou'westers. The discovery of an "alien enemy" in the shape of some one else's garment on your chair was an occasion for brief and savage comment, but I think our quartette was the most harmonious of the various groups billeted in the village, though I can only speak of the others from hearsay. The only approach to a serious quarrel occurred when "The Perfect Lady" inadvertently used the "Tit Willow's" tooth-brush, and the latter, outraged, boiled the contaminated instrument on an Etna stove by way of restoring it to purity. There was another perilous moment,

when my only available bath-towel disappeared, and I sought it in a damp and furious condition, accusing all and sundry of its removal. But the others were ere this blanketed and prone, so wisely feigned a child-like slumber while I mopped up miserably with a most inadequate duster! The towel reappeared next morning, in my corner, once more justifying the "Sergeant-Major's" oft-repeated maxim, "You should look for things by daylight."

I cherish a grateful memory of the French family who dwelt in the house, and did much for us. They cleaned our crowded quarters, and supplied us nightly with precious hot water, which we took it in turns to fetch in a canvas bucket that the all-foreseeing "Sergeant-Major" had brought out with her. The daughter of the house told us she would always remember the English by their strange affection for hot water. "We never had it before they came," she said. English soldiers had been billeted on them in the early days of war. "How had they understood them?" we asked. "Oh, by signs—and then the English soldier learned so quickly. He could soon say 'Promenade' and 'fiancée'!"

The distance between our mess and the hospital was about two and a half miles. We breakfasted at 7 A.M. (I was almost invariably late, and bolted my food like a boaconstrictor), and then scurried for the "bus," a motor-lorry covered in with a tarpaulin stretched over a wooden frame-

work. This vehicle conveyed us to and from the hospital daily, and I learned to hate it with undying bitterness. It was supposed, I believe, to hold fourteen,—I have known it carry thirty-seven of us, inside and out, packed on each other's knees in layers, while it swung round corners at perilous speed, bumping over roads deep in mud or snow and ploughed into ruts by the passage of troops, guns, and transport waggons.

Two drivers were attached to the chariot, which was frequently used by them as a bedroom, and which they had malignantly dubbed "Potsdam Villa." One driver was fat, the other thin. We called them respectively the "Flesh" and the "Devil," and the driving, particularly of the "Flesh," was fast and furious. It was not, however, until he had been exchanged for a chauffeur far more careful in his methods, but apparently less acquainted with the peculiar devilries of the old "bus," that the accident we had long expected occurred. But that is another story.

The Malassise (*not* Molasses or Malise) Hospital was a very large building situated on the main road between St Omer and Blendecques. Originally a convent, it had passed into the hands of a wealthy monastic order, who owned much of the land in the immediate neighbourhood. It was a theological school at the outbreak of war. All its able-bodied inhabitants, monks and pupils alike, left it to serve in various

capacities with the French army—only some old lay brothers remained to keep the premises in order to the best of their ability.

Two capital T's placed end to end convey a rough idea of the plan of the hospital. A long stone passage ran down the main building. A staircase at each end led to the dormitories and class-rooms, now converted into wards, and named after members of the Belgian Royal Family. So closely had the real "raison d'être" of the hospital been kept from us, that it was not until after our arrival there that we discovered the patients to be, not French, but Flemish civilians, brought in from Ypres and the surrounding districts, where typhoid fever had broken out with some violence. So the ward on the top storey, which ran from end to end of the main building and contained seventy-two beds, was called Elizabeth. The children's ward was Marie José; the remaining wards were known respectively as Charles, Albert, and Leopold. Eventually some smaller rooms on the ground floor, as well as a narrow corridor running between the main passage and Charles Ward, were also used to accommodate patients, and were known as wards I., II., III., IV., V., and "Corridor."

Though prepared for the reception of civilians of all ages and both sexes, the Malassise Hospital was administered by the R.A.M.C. on the lines of a British Military Hospital. Its primary object was the protec-

tion of our own troops by removing those stricken with enteric from the districts where they were to be billeted or entrenched. The civil hospitals at Ypres and Poperinghe were already full, and later in the year Ypres, and to a lesser extent Poperinghe, were subjected to a bombardment that must have made hospital life, to say the least of it, distinctly unrestful. The Poperinghe Hospital, being less endangered, continued to exist after Ypres had been completely evacuated, and it was from this institution that we received most of our patients. At first these arrived in a terribly exhausted condition, having been jolted some score of miles, or more, over rough roads, in a stage of the illness that would in normal times have been treated by the enforcement of absolute rest. Sometimes they came in with bruised backs that in their emaciated condition threatened to break down into bed-sores—often the bed-sores were there already. Later, when the spread of the disease had been checked by inoculation, coupled with all possible sanitary precautions, the authorities were able to keep the sufferers at Poperinghe till they were more fit to travel.

The hospital had been open for a week when we V.A.D.'s arrived to take our share in the work. Its preparation had been hasty, and was of necessity incomplete. Several wards had no furniture beyond the beds, and perhaps one table. The necessity for placing any apparatus in use on the floor,

and stooping to handle it while attending to a patient, gave rise to acute backache. There were no lockers or cupboards, so the bare boards or a spare bed (if by chance there were one) had to be used for piling linen, which led to no little confusion. The patients' own clothes were made up into bundles immediately after their arrival, and sent to be disinfected, with a list attached. The composition of these lists, if the nurses were busy settling the patients in bed, was left to the orderlies, and great at times was their perplexity as to the correct nomenclature of female under-garments.

"What am I to call this, please, Sister?" was their frequent cry as they held up some weird piece of clothing between finger and thumb!

In that first wild rush the Sisters openly declared that their work was, from sheer necessity, a demonstration of "enteric fever, as she should *not* be nursed." With a shortage of linen, basins, sinks, &c., the elaborate precautions insisted on at home to prevent the attendants contracting the disease could not possibly be observed. Nor was there sufficient staff to allow any but the worst cases to be fed by hand, or so lifted in bed that no effort was required from them. Nevertheless, the great majority did well, though there were a fair number of deaths in February and March.

We were all glad when the new mortuary was built outside the hospital, since in the beginning it had been a room

opening out of the corridor, subsequently transformed into a kitchen bunk!

The furnishing and equipment of the wards improved rapidly, and by the beginning of April we had well-nigh forgotten the difficulties under which we had laboured at first. A tent section was early added to the hospital, where many of the male patients were nursed, the building being kept for women, children, and old men.

For me, personally, the most interesting time spent in the hospital was as junior nurse in the Corridor Ward, which contained twelve beds. These were at first occupied by men, who were subsequently removed to East Camp to make room for girls and women. Sister C——, under whom I worked, was "Theatre Sister," and during her absence at operations, as well as when she was off duty, I was left in charge of the Corridor, though the Sister of Nos. IV. and V., who dwelt across the passage, was ready to come to my help in case of emergency. There was also a Belgian (or, as Sister C—— insisted on calling him, a Belgium) orderly, who was a source of perpetual exasperation, since, though he spoke French and English fluently besides his native Flemish, he never appeared to understand an order in either tongue, and his total lack of cleanliness and competence was only equalled by his inordinate conceit. Even as interpreter he failed, as he substituted fallacies of his own for the statements we desired him to make

to the patients, and coolly boasted that he had done so; while on one occasion, when I asked him to ascertain the reason for the distress of a sick girl who was sobbing bitterly, he merely replied, "Oh, only a woman's tears, Sister," and lunched away!

There were other drawbacks to the Corridor. It contained eight large windows and five doors, and the Cave of the Winds must have been stagnation compared to the disturbance of the atmosphere which took place if several of these happened to be open simultaneously in a March gale. Linen, &c., had to be obtained from Ward V. across the main passage. It was my painful duty to fetch it, and as the Sisters quarrelled perpetually over the quantity due to the Corridor Ward, I was invariably blamed for taking too much or too little, according to which ward I happened to be in. This, however, I bore with philosophy, likewise the everlasting struggle for the hospitality of other people's stoves when I was desirous of warming food, &c., for the patients, since we had no heating apparatus of our own.

I have said little so far concerning the patients themselves. This local outbreak of enteric fever was a small side issue of the War—one which, thanks to modern medical science, caused comparatively little loss of life. Yet the tragedy of these stricken refugees might have filled volumes had it not been dwarfed by the more horrible events

taking place in other parts of Europe.

Entire families came into the hospital together. Often it became necessary to inform some weak convalescent that child, or husband, or other of their kin had succumbed to the disease. It must be admitted that the men, at least, appeared to receive the news stolidly, but the grief of the mothers for their children was pitiful.

Even sadder was the fate of those whose relatives had been left at Ypres, only to be driven from their homes by German shells, sometimes leaving no traces behind them. On several occasions, even after the most careful inquiries had been made, children were brought back to the hospital by the convoy which had set out with them towards home, since they found that home no longer existent and the family fled, no one knew whither. For these and others who had no other refuge a large convalescent settlement was organised at Montreuil.

The difficulties of nursing were increased by the lack of a common language between us and our patients. There were two Belgian doctors, two nurses, and several orderlies, who were, of course, acquainted with the Flemish tongue, and some few of the better educated patients could speak French. I bought a 'Flemish Military Guide,' destined for the use of our troops in Flanders, and conscientiously endeavoured to imbibe knowledge from its pages. The language falls between English and German,

a fact many of the Sisters must have failed to grasp, for they would insist on addressing the patients in rudimentary French, though, in many cases, the equivalent English word would have given them a better chance of being understood. The 'Guide' helped me little, since it dealt largely with military necessities and the cross-examination of suspected spies, and rather stultified itself by the astounding directions it gave as to pronunciation, for example:

"Pronounce 'ui'—as giving to the first *e* in *eye*, the sound of *a* in pluck!"

But I managed to pick up enough of the language to deal with the daily incidents of ward life.

There were some among the patients, particularly the girls, whom I shall always remember with pleasure; but of the majority it might truthfully be said, in the words of Mark Twain, that "their manners were none and their customs were beastly."

Novelists and journalists appear to regard nursing as romantic, seeing it as the gentle occupation of "ministering angels" with feathers ever unsoiled and unruffled by their tender task. They speak as fools. There are, no doubt, many diseases more repulsive and painful than typhoid, but, personally, I should prefer to die of one that is less so. Many a morning when, at 7.30 A.M., I crossed the threshold of the Malassise, I have set my teeth and fought down the nausea caused by the very

characteristic odour that pervades an enteric hospital. I was spared something of this by the succession of violent colds that afflicted me during my first few weeks in France, and which, though they made day wearisome and night a period of choking discomfort, temporarily destroyed my sense of smell. It was only in happier days that we admitted to each other with what shuddering reluctance we had been wont to enter the hospital door. Before that mutual confession, I had imagined myself to be the only one possessed by this weakness! I will only speak of one other unpleasing feature of ward life, and that was the quantity of vermin that infested the hospital, particularly the female wards, as many of these Belgian women boasted hair that would have qualified them to pose as advertisements for Harlene, but which, abundant and beautiful as it was, was inhabited by "souvenirs," as Tommy hath it. Weakly, in my humble opinion, the hospital authorities bowed to their objections to having it cut away, and not only did this add to the attention its owners required, but failed to save the hair in the long-run, since the fever caused it to fall out during convalescence.

Besides enteric fever, other complications crept into the hospital—*e.g.*, pneumonia, diphtheria, and various skin diseases. Diphtheria threatened to give most trouble, and anti-toxin was injected into us as well as into the patients. We

were none the worse for the operation, and the new enemy was quickly crushed.

There were, not unnaturally, casualties among the staff. It was a triumph for inoculation that no nurse or medical officer, and only one orderly, contracted typhoid fever, though, as I have before stated, few of the stringent precautions against infection observed in our home hospitals were feasible here. But cases of severe sore throat and poisoned fingers occurred among the nurses, and in one instance a Sister suffered from a septic hand caused by an old woman who had bitten her like a wild beast in the madness of delirium.

After three months' work "The Perfect Lady," to the regret of all, was invalided home with rheumatism, a catastrophe which had previously happened to one of the Sisters. Indeed, the dampness of our quarters caused many of us to suffer more or less from this complaint, if only in the form of general stiffness. Our nights were troubled, too, by attacks of furious cramp, rendered more trying by the fact that the narrowness of our accommodation on the floor made much change of position impossible without disturbing each other—an unpardonable sin when sleep is precious. After an outbreak of influenza several of the staff went for a time to Lady Gifford's convalescent home at Hardelet, whence they returned as giants refreshed, with the exception of one V.A.D. who elected to stay at the Boulogne Rest

Station while a substitute was sent up in her place.

I escaped with a slight attack of the dreaded "flu," and was able to remain on duty. Truth to tell, I hated the idea of "going sick" in a room possessed of only one small window—while three camp-beds almost touching each other, and at one time all occupied, took up almost the whole of the available floor space. I had one "scare," in the shape of a "mercury rash," a skin affection caused by disinfecting my hands with perchloride of mercury, which I at first feared might be some horror contracted from a patient. The trouble promptly yielded to treatment, and I breathed again.

I have said nothing hitherto about our food. Not that the subject did not assume great importance even to me who had never before taken much interest in what I should eat or what I should drink. We were supplied with Army rations—meat, potatoes, tea, cheese, jam, &c. The jams had different names, but were apparently of one substance. It was said that the officers nearer the base commandeered the marmalade and honey for their own consumption! Be that as it may, we did not see either for the first three months. We had a mess allowance—three francs per diem for Sisters, two francs for V.A.D.'s, and out of this subscribed for milk, butter, eggs, &c. Butter was expensive—we ate cheese and jam at nearly every meal, often reversing the usual order of

things, and devouring it while we waited for our meat to be served; for time was very precious while we messed so far from the hospital. The food, if monotonous, was neither bad nor scanty, but the feverish haste with which it had to be absorbed seemed to render it unsatisfying. Our digestions, on the whole, played up like trumps, and "did their bit" with surprising efficiency considering the strain put upon them.

Sometimes even the unquiet conveyance of "Potsdam Villa" failed us, owing to breakdown or blocked roads.

Once, soon after our arrival at the Malassise, Sister R—and I came off duty at 5 P.M., to find the omnibus had started without us. It was pitch dark, the roads were deep in slush, and half-thawed snow was driving down the wind. We wanted our tea, and felt disinclined for walking. The ambulance which had returned that afternoon from Poperinghe with a fresh batch of patients stood in the yard. We asked the men in charge if they could drive us home. They agreed cheerily, declaring that they knew quite well where our billets were situated. We ourselves had not the slightest idea. Remember, we had had no time to take our bearings, life so far having oscillated between billet, mess, and hospital and back again, transported all the while in a vehicle from which we could see about as much of the outside world as prisoners in a Black Maria. When the car rattled into St

Omer, however, I began to feel uneasy. At least I knew we were not quartered there—indeed at this time we had not even permission to enter the town. But perhaps the driver had some errand of his own. No. He stopped before a solid brick house, and told us we had arrived at our billets. We hastened to undeceive him. This house was occupied, it appeared, by Army Sisters working in the Stationary Hospital at St Omer. Where did we want to go then? I timidly suggested Longuenesse. This was actually the name of our village, but I did not know it then, merely recalling a fleeting glimpse of the name on a sign-post.

How far it might be from the haven I desired I knew not. However, we plunged into the darkness with our escort—a corporal and two privates. At a cross-road we stopped, and I descended into the mud and whirling snow—my apron twisting madly round my legs—to try and get some idea of our whereabouts. Sister R—sat tight. If we wandered "somewhere in France" all night, she would not emerge from the microbe-haunted shelter of the ambulance. Out of the snow-swept darkness came a voice—very young and very pleasant. "Sister," it said, "can I be of any use?" The corporal's lantern revealed the tall and shadowy figure of a British officer—I could not see his face. I explained our dilemma, and he promptly directed us back to the hospital. This

was more than I could bear, and I mournfully declared I had been there since 7.30 A.M., and was longing to escape for the night at least. He pointed up another road, and said he thought our billets lay in that direction. I had forgotten by this time what I had even suspected to be the name of the village, but informed him hopefully that it possessed a tower, with a clock that wouldn't go, and a churchyard that was a great deal too full. (It became fuller later on, since our refugees were buried there.) I was the more convinced of the officer's extreme youth by the fact that he did not laugh. I had not met such perfect manners since I lost my way in Eton College, and was guided to my brother's room by one of the Fourth Form. Still I felt if he had been even younger and a Boy Scout, he would have been able to identify the village, whose salient features I thought I had most vividly described. As it was—"Sister, I'm afraid I haven't the foggiest," he said, "but I am sure your billets are up that road."

Away we went again, overshoot the right turning, came back on our tracks, asked directions from passer-by and cottager (it was fortunate that I could speak the language), and finally arrived at the goal of our desires. I rushed gladly into the warmth of the house, but was a moment later followed by the distracted corporal complaining that Sister R—— had declined to leave the car, as she refused to believe we could have got home at

last. So back I had to paddle to persuade her of the glad tidings, and our benefactors departed with our blessing. I have often wondered since what their comments were.

That was not my only experience of a casual lift. I was once asked to go back to our mess in the hospital hearse, but preferred to walk, shrinking as much from the obvious discomfort of the vehicle as from its lugubrious associations.

Hitherto I had always thought that poets were apt to get a little over-excited on the subject of spring, but this year I welcomed its coming with rapture. No longer now did we rise in the dark, and wrestle with frozen fingers to coerce the "slithy" stud through the unyielding collar. We depended for our awakening in the mornings on the "Sergeant-Major's" alarm clock, which we regarded with mingled feelings of gratitude and loathing. It had a maddening habit of sounding the alarm an hour too soon, but its methodical owner always contrived to fall asleep on her right side, where she had placed it within reach, that she might clasp and quell it in the twinkling of an eye should this aberration occur. Daily, at about 6 A.M., we heard the whir of an aeroplane flying from the Headquarters of the Aviation Corps, which was at Longuenesse, in the direction of St Omer. Longer days and gentler weather meant that our time off duty (two hours daily, but much curtailed by the necessary

locomotion) gave us a chance of exploring our surroundings.

After some negotiation we were allowed passes in and out of St Omer—a welcome boon. It is a small town of quaint, inconsequent streets and by-ways, paved with cobbles, that were harsh indeed to footsore nurses. On the south side lie fortifications said to have been constructed during the campaigns of Marlborough. On the highest spot in the town stands the Cathedral, dominating the surrounding flats. Under the clean-washed skies of early morning, backed by clouds heavy with storm, or dark against the burning sunsets which are the glory of level lands, I can recall the old Cathedral's beauty in all these settings. At the eastern end of the town rises the tower of the ruined Abbaye St Bertin, on whose summit in the month of May a huge searchlight was constructed, which lit the surrounding country like a revolving sun in the darkness. There is another and modern church of red brick, now used as a motor garage, the chancel being curtained off and cars stabled between the pillars, less destructive occupants than were Cromwell's troopers when availing themselves of similar accommodation in England.

G.H.Q. (General Headquarters) found itself (as they say in France) half-way down the Rue St Bertin, and here the British Commander-in-Chief "might have been seen" (only I didn't happen to see

him) making history at his writing-table, or playing with a cat on the window-sill.

We were about twenty-five miles from the nearest point at which fighting was actually in progress. When the direction of the wind was favourable we could hear the guns, vibrating, insistent, oppressive. At first the sound was nerve-racking, but human imagination soon tires, and before long a vague sadness, sometimes merely a sense of irritation at the tragic stupidity of the thing to which we listened, replaced our first emotion.

I was writing letters in the billet on a morning gay with sunshine while crash followed crash with scarcely a minute's interval. Later they talked of a great victory, but it was only the chequered triumph of Neuve Chapelle.

It is a reticent war indeed—no man or woman is allowed to see farther than his or her inquisitive nose. We were warned to give no hint in letters or conversation of the task in which we were engaged. Naturally, the town and country folk to whom we talked thought that we were nursing wounded soldiers. The outbreak of typhoid was kept a secret until the worst was over. I fenced questions by referring vaguely to pneumonia, repressing all allusion to enteric fever or civilian refugees from Belgium. Even "Eye-witness," whom I found to be an acquaintance of the past, told me he had not known of the Malassise Hospital's existence till I revealed it to him.

On the whole we saw little of the French Army, as this section of the War Zone was in the hands of British troops. Double posts of English and French sentries guarded the main approaches to St Omer—and a French Mission, quartered in the Place Victor Hugo, was attached to General Headquarters. Once we saw a French supply column, a blue snake winding through the green country, curiously unreal in its reminder of a stereotyped Academy picture.

But in the countryside "Tommy" reigned supreme. We met him first in the shape of a detachment of the Munsters—marching at ease, haggard and mud-stained, led by an officer scarcely past boyhood, yet with years of compressed experience behind his set face and tired eyes. These had been early in the field, holding the line while at home Kitcheners' Armies prepared with feverish haste to follow. Soon, though in all quietness and secrecy, the new battalions began to pour in. They filled the town and villages around. One woman told me she thought they might prove harder to dislodge than the Germans. But she spoke in friendly jest. Tommy was a welcome and remunerative guest to these women, who lived on what our soldiers' wives would consider an utterly inadequate allowance (1 fr. per day plus 50 c. for each child), working, waiting, without help, and practically without news; for in spite of our much-abused censorship, we are allowed

much information here compared with the barren communiqués which are all the French Government permits to reach the Press. Yet there was no complaint on their lips beyond "C'est longue, la guerre, n'est ce pas, mademoiselle?"

On April 13 we were moved from our billets—not without regret after all—and accommodated in tents erected in a field which adjoined the hospital garden. Life changed completely after this removal (accomplished, of course, in torrents of rain), since we were now close to our work, and need waste no more time in the dust-filled, crowded, springless "bus," on whose attractions I have expatiated. Ere this she had smashed her steering gear in a foolish attempt to climb a tree—angry at being suddenly diverted from her course by the new chauffeur, who was endeavouring to avoid collision with a lorry full of men of the Flying Corps. No one was seriously hurt, probably owing to the tree, since but for that obstacle the "bus" would undoubtedly have charged the windows of an estaminet, and the occupants in front would have fared badly.

Our tents were of the field-hospital variety, supported by a pole at each end and double-roofed. If properly pitched, with a space between the roofs, they were impervious to wet, even during the violent thunderstorms with which we were occasionally visited; but if carelessness allowed the outer roof to sag and touch the inner canvas, life within became un-

duly moist. We had boarded floors and camp-beds, and thought ourselves in luxury. There were two to a tent. The "Sergeant-Major" and I shared a canvas home which had once formed part of an Indian hospital equipment, and judging from its colour of dingy mustard, had seen some service in sheltering the sick Hindu. It was known in the lines as the "dirty tent," which grieved the "Sergeant-Major" greatly. The poles were of bamboo—a suggestion of the tropics that seemed out of place in the cold of those first spring nights in camp. My stable companion, on the strength of a few lessons in carpentry in her youth, combined with much natural intelligence and muscle, had been assigned the post of hospital carpenter, and she evolved ingenious shelves and cupboards from the packing-cases and bacon-boxes in which stores from England were wont to arrive. These contrivances added greatly to our comfort. The tents were cold at first, particularly as no heating apparatus was allowed for fear of fire, but as the season advanced the nights became a joy of starlit freshness, and it seemed a foolish thing to waste them in dull sleep.

In the evenings we wandered in the garden of the monks. This stretched from the south door in the centre of the building in a long narrow rectangle enclosed by hedges. It was the "Tit Willow" who first made the disconcerting discovery that the main path was not in a line with the central clock tower,

though evidently laid out with the intention of being so. Perhaps the clock had willed otherwise—it was certainly capable of any devilry. It was never in agreement with the clocks of St Omer—it usually chimed a quarter of an hour before or behind the time indicated on its dial, and its melancholy wail on three notes, to which the orderlies chanted bitterly, "I don't care, I don't care," as they dawdled or bustled through their distasteful work, was a sound we cordially detested. But the garden became a pleasant place in summer. Where the wings of the hospital ran south, forming three sides of a square with the main building, the open space between them was planted with a splendid avenue of limes. Beyond this lay the garden proper, mother of vegetables and fruit trees whose blossom in early May was a dream of delicate beauty. Flowers the monks cultivated little, save for a thick border of white pinks, richly fragrant, which ran on either side the afore-mentioned path. At the far end of the garden was a mound, with a tiny chapel hollowed in its side, and a crucifix on its summit. In the lower part of the field wherein we camped was a small enclosure containing the graves of the nuns who had once held sway at the Malassise. Their resting-place was exquisitely kept by their successors.

Our work lessened steadily as spring advanced. The sick died or recovered, and many of the later arrivals from Poperinghe were received by us in

the convalescent stage. We had a few victims of the bombardment there, including a child or two, badly hurt by shrapnel. Ward life resolved itself into the making of beds, scrubbing of lockers, and the tidying of cupboards.

Not that the first of these occupations is one to be spoken of lightly. Each training-school for nurses has its own ideas of how beds should be made, and sends its pupils into the world convinced that by its methods alone can salvation be attained. Here all, whatever their previous habits, had to conform to the military pattern. This led to rebellious mutterings. Beds made according to Army regulations must feel, I should think, like strait-jackets to the patients; but it is the symmetry of their appearance at inspections that really counts in a military hospital.

Of inspectors we had our fill. Daily Colonel G—— M——, R.A.M.C., our commanding officer, accompanied by the Matron, visited every nook and corner of the hospital. In the first cold ugly weeks, his peculiarly attractive smile, and the exquisite fit of her uniform, were the only pleasant sights of the day, and I looked out for them quite hungrily.

Besides this diurnal visit, we were always liable to sudden pouncings by the Matron-in-Chief (this was usually in connection with changes of staff, since no Sister was supposed to languish too long in the same hospital), or from the

Director of Medical Services, or a stray General, or perhaps a French or Belgian doctor of high repute. It took me some time to get accustomed to medical men in khaki. I would venture to guess that those who had been in civil practice till the war broke out took a little time to get accustomed to the transformation in themselves. Anyhow, in one or two cases, the substitution of a military swagger for the "bedside manner" seemed a trifle overdone, if humorous, and few had learned to salute without bowing, as though under a lifted hat.

Between Sisters (and, of course, V.A.D.'s) and medical officers there is, by hospital etiquette, a great gulf fixed; but as cats may look at kings, and also listen to their conversation, we irreverently liked or laughed at (sometimes even laughed with) these monarchs of the wards. And, as was our habit, we bestowed strange names upon them. There was the "Pink Pig" (which explains itself); "the great, big, beautiful doll"; the "G——s," this to distinguish him from a colleague of the same name but less striking individuality; and his bosom friend, "St John the Supine," —a young man who leaned if he could not sit, sat if he could not lie down, and would have yawned in the midst of an active volcano.

I have alluded several times in the course of this narrative to our orderlies, who indeed might be described in the words of the satirist of the

R.A.M.C. as "rather a mixed collection." At first we had several men trained under the Red Cross and St John's Ambulance Associations. These had some idea of nursing, and I was much impressed with the tenderness and delicacy they showed when working in the female wards. But between them and the "regulars" hostility was rampant. Later, only the latter remained; and of these many had enlisted since the outbreak of war, and had had no previous experience of hospital life. Most of them loathed their job—which is not a matter for astonishment,—and a few were in constant trouble for drunkenness. I had felt a sneaking sympathy with this weakness, until a mess orderly tried to wait at table and dance a fandango at the same moment—a combination of efforts which resulted in a lapful of soup for me.

But there were other types. "The Filbert," who had been ground man at a Sussex cricket club, and was wont to dash through the wards as though to deliver a fast ball at the other end, was a really delightful person of no small wit. "The Toreador" was a dark-eyed, olive-skinned boy, versed in the arts of conjuring and palmistry and a nephew of the Zancigs, whose tricks of thought-reading were once the talk of London. Naturally, no persuasion would wring from him the secret of their arts. The laboratory assistant had been a minstrel at the Palladium, and was conspicuous at orderlies' con-

certs—entertainments which were started to keep the weaker spirits out of mischief when off duty, and which some, at least, of the Sisters were expected to attend. They were curious performances, held in the underground chamber where the orderlies messed. I avoided them after one or two experiences, but a few of the items on the programme remain in my memory. Particularly a humorous ditty contributed by a sergeant of the 16th Lancers, during which the Colonel and the Matron, side by side in the front row, stared thoughtfully and sternly, and the orderlies rent the atmosphere (no mean feat, since it was semi-solid by that time) with shouts of mirth, and we sat between, chewing our handkerchiefs to pulp in the effort to indicate that we were *not* amused.

Later on the orderlies' entertainments were superseded by concerts given by the Artists Rifles, now quartered in St Omer, which were of a type we rejoiced in, though often speculating, rather wistfully, on the probable nature of the verses which the performers quite obviously left out. The favourite of our stage was a supple, songful youth, who, clad in shorts (which he seemed to prefer to the more usual nether garments of the King's uniform) and with his identity disc fixed in his eye to represent a monocle, warbled "Jones of the Lancers" with a verve that evoked squeals of applause.

By the end of April a new feature had been added to the hospital in the shape of West

Camp. Here lay some of our own soldiers who were stricken with measles, both of the common and the German variety. The Artists Rifles contributed several victims to the latter complaint, and their comrades came to visit them in their affliction, and were sometimes, after permission had been duly obtained, entertained by us at tea in the Recreation Tent.

Our removal to summer quarters gave us an opportunity of exploring a part of the country to which we had not before been able to penetrate. About a mile and a half to the south lay Blendecques, in the valley of the Ar——, a pleasant town with gardens full of lilac and laburnum, estaminets advertising viands in more or less correct English, and a fine old watermill overlooking the river. For a few days Blendecques became a city of Highlanders. Walking there in the gold May evenings you found them playing football in the church square, washing in one of the many streams which fed the river, or talking, regardless of the limitations of mere language, to some enraptured child. Then one hot Sunday morning they marched away piping—while we sat at mess. Many did not live to see another Sunday.

It was hard to believe at times you were not merely watching the movements of troops on summer manœuvres, or visiting the varied camps of representatives of the Empire's armies brought to England for a Jubilee or Coronation

ceremony. Artillery — horse and mule batteries — Indian cavalry—Australian regiments —English, Scotch, and Irish infantry, the eternal “Tipperary” on their lips,—we saw them all pass out of our sight to the trenches. In the words of “The Shropshire Lad” —

“Far and near, and low and louder,
On the roads of earth go by,
Dear to friends, and food for powder,
Soldiers marching—all to die.”

But we saw some come back, in the familiar grey ambulance cars, creeping quietly towards St Omer, carefully spaced as they had come from the danger zone, to afford the least possible target—an endless, monotonous procession, suggestive of nightmare.

The men who died in the town hospital were buried in a cemetery very near to ours. A huge trench was dug here, and the rough deal coffins, each covered with a Union Jack, were piled in a cart and driven from the town. They were hidden from sight, and the rest of the trench remained open—waiting. There was a line of wooden crosses, one to every three or four coffins, with the names of the dead inscribed. It was a pitiful place.

“Greet them again, with tender words
and grave,
For saving thee, themselves they
could not save.”

Towards the end of May the “Tit Willow” and I had a whole day's holiday. It requires many weeks, each made up of seven days' of curtailed

liberty, to ensure proper appreciation of such an occurrence.

First we lay in drowsy bliss while the 6.30 bell pealed through the camp, and the kitchen orderly, who possessed a falsetto voice of extreme unpleasantness, made unearthly noises as he stoked the "Sawyer" boilers in the cook-house. These boilers, I may remark *en passant*, were the nightly scene of struggle, subtlety, and bitterness, for it was from them we drew our scanty supply of hot water. Fair-play was a jewel that sometimes slipped from its string in these encounters. There were those who took more than their share; those who did not trouble to refill when they had drawn; those who—but why elaborate? A limited water supply has been a source of strife since the dawn of history.

That holiday morning we dressed late and leisurely, and walked to St Omer. The day was intensely hot, the road shadeless, our serge uniforms heavy, but we cared little. At the Porte d'Arras our passes were examined by the private of the Artists Rifles on sentry duty. At this time they guarded and policed the town, exercising these functions with conscientious thoroughness, particularly when an indignant General who had not condescended to carry a *laissez passer* would be held up in the street, or five minutes' conversation with our alluring selves insisted on ere we were permitted to proceed. Our plans

for the day were indefinite—after months of routine there is a charm in indefinite projects—but they included shopping and a hotel luncheon. Shopping in St Omer was at times an exasperating performance, since no French girl would attend to us if she could possibly transact business with a British officer, so at the sight of a Sam Browne belt we generally retreated to seek our requirements elsewhere. To-day fortune smiled—or the officers didn't, so we made our purchases swiftly and proceeded down the Rue St Bertin. Past G.H.Q., where the Union Jack waved over the sentries' heads—past the house wherein "Eye-witness" and other staff officers lived and moved and had their baths—we hated them for their baths—down to the ruined abbey at the far end of the street we wandered. Here we found soldiers at work in the tower, commanded by a small shy captain. I climbed the spiral staircase to the summit, only to be confronted by a locked door. I descended, warm and discomfited, to where the "Tit Willow" awaited me below. Presently the little captain came timidly and offered to find the door-key. Up I went again, this time with the "Tit Willow" in tow, and we emerged on to a platform whereon a searchlight apparatus was in process of erection, and gazed forth on to the surrounding country. We failed, however, to locate "the front," owing to the tactless inter-

position of several hills, so we retraced our steps, saying one to the other, "Now for baths." For there was in this neighbourhood a bathing establishment, provided to meet the insane fancies of the English, but it was too far from the hospital for us to use it often. When we had the chance of doing so, we felt our immersion to be something sacramental, calling for feast and song. I bathed, and had nearly finished dressing, but was searching foolishly for a collar that was all the while pendent to my blouse, when the "Tit Willow" cried upon me from without. I admitted her, breathless with laughter, and proffering a powder-puff.

"I thought you were next door, and some one opened it, so I said, 'Here's the powder, old thing,' but it was really an Artists Rifle," she explained.

This kind of thing is always happening to the "Tit Willows" of the world. She discovered my collar, and I powdered my nose, after which we sallied forth in search of luncheon. We boldly partook of this meal at the Hotel de France. I refer to our courage because the conventual restrictions under which we now lived had made us bashful, and as we were (except for a lady in multi-coloured raiment) the only representatives of our sex in the crowded dining-room, we attracted much attention. I, being of Scottish descent and thrifty, always regretted paying for that luncheon, seeing

that the faintest encouragement would obviously have transformed the two fat French officers at the corner table from interested observers into willing hosts. But we knew that must not be, and conveyed the fact with all due delicacy by the discretion of our bearing. An interpreter, lunching alone, studied the situation with unconcealed amusement. I do not remember what we ate, but I know that it was good. With minds at peace we left the town and followed the canal towards Arques. Half-way thither we subsided on to the bank and smoked cigarettes, while an occasional barge slipped slowly by us, and the trees on the opposite side cast lengthening reflections in the water. At Arques, a manufacturing town of sordid ugliness, we met the British Army again, bathing as usual. Arques had one feature of interest for us—the Jenkinsestaminet—so called because its proprietress had informed us that a certain Capitaine Jenkins (the softened "j" improved the name) was billeted there, and that he had six children, whom, when at home, he was in the habit of kissing every night! The officer whom we saw on the premises appeared a thought too juvenile to wallow thus in the domestic affections, and we strongly suspected him of pulling the old lady's leg, but we did not whisper to her of treachery. Why should we be thus unkind, when for 35 c. she would regale us with coffee, eggs, and "tartines" of the best, ex-

pressing the while her admiration of our devotion in coming so far from home to nurse the sick? The Briton's comparative immunity from homesickness is always incomprehensible to the average French mind. She told us, too, simply yet dramatically, of the days in September when the Uhlans were only ten kilometres away, and all night long she heard the feet of the refugees who hurried past her house, which already sheltered ten exhausted women. And in the morning came the British regiments by the same road, but in the opposite direction. "It was the English who saved us," she said, and spoke with tenderness of our soldiers—"tousjours si convenables."

But this is a digression. On our whole holiday we did not take the upper road to the Jenkins estaminet, but continued to follow the canal till we came to the place of seven locks. These, constructed one above the other on the hill behind Blendecques, were considered an engineering triumph. Here we saw a barge, laden with wounded, on its way to St Omer. At first she was on a level with us, then sank slowly as the water in the lock was drained away, and through the open hatchways we could see into the ward. The men's wounds appeared to be all abdominal—the cases are classified as early as possible, and this smooth if leisurely method of transport reserved for the most serious. The Sisters who worked in these hospital barges had to endure much discomfort

from cramped quarters and stifling heat.

Arques that day was gay with flags. "Italy's in," we surmised, and had this confirmed by a vendor of "sirops," at whose door we pleaded for refreshment. There did not seem to be any great excitement concerning the accession of a new Ally. France, her eyes well open to her situation, appears to take good news and bad with equal coolness. Reluctantly we abandoned the line of the canal, which would have led us too far afield, and struck westward for Blendecques. On a grassy hill we rested again, and spake of men and matters, among the former of the wireless operator whom we had once seen on the road to Wizerne, sitting in his car like a lonely tinker whose belongings had taken root. From this desolate spot he transmitted messages to G.H.Q. Selections from these were posted daily on the Aviation Ground. I remember one, in describing the Allies' raid on Karlsruhe, hazarded the opinion that this reprisal for German attacks on our English towns could not fail to give pleasure to "men and women of average virtue!" Saints and sinners might think otherwise apparently if they chose.

Our "wireless" friend told us, or rather told the "Tit Willow"—ever the recipient of confidences—that once, rebelling against the monotony of existence, he had run the car to Poperinghe, plant and all, to see what he could of the bombardment, but, except

for this excursion, he had sat on that road for six months. Is there aught so tedious as war?

We had late leave that night—till 9 P.M.—but we nearly outstayed it. It was always an effort to tear oneself from Blendecques. Its water, woods, and gardens made it a paradise compared with the bare flat country round it. It must have been a pleasant billet for a soldier, particularly if he made friends with a girl we saw one evening on her doorstep. She was pale and shadowy as a spirit of the dusk, yet she left on our minds an ineffaceable impression of beauty. Her hair framed her face softly, and she wore, as was the fashion with these village girls, a large coloured handkerchief arranged diamond-wise over her skirt, and forming a most fascinating apron.

Though we knew it not, the time at the Malassise Hospital was drawing to an end for some of us. The enteric fever was practically over, and our staff of trained Sisters had been much reduced. The last contingent hailed from Australia, and arrived at midnight in the rain. The "Sergeant-Major" and I had to find them light and bedding and other necessities which were not immediately to hand, so I have cause to remember their coming.

The hospital was now in course of preparation for the reception of our wounded. There was trouble about the water supply, and the C.O.

and the Adjutant haunted the fields at twilight with divining-rods, in the hope of discovering a spring. Eventually this difficulty was solved by pipes laid on from the town.

About the middle of June we were asked if we would sign on for another six months' service, this time not under the B.R.C.S., but as Army Reserve Probationers. Some V.A.D.'s accepted, among them the "Sergeant-Major." "Tit Wil- low" and I refused, being unwilling for private reasons to remain abroad for another half-year. The Matron asked if we might remain until our original contract expired—*i.e.*, till the 3rd of August. For a time no answer was vouchsafed, and life continued on the usual lines.

On Sunday, June 20, I went to hear mass at the Cathedral, in the hope of listening to good music. Herein I was rather disappointed, but my morning was not wasted. Trudging to the town, with a heavy bundle on his shoulder, was an old French peasant, who bade me good-day and walked beside me—talking. He had served in 1870, he said, when France was betrayed by Bazaine. Now she had been once more betrayed—caught unprepared—through the negligence of an endless succession of Governments—changed as a man changes his shirt. Petain had left Lille open to the enemy—as the door of that house (he pointed to it dramatically) was open. But the war was glorious. There were those who wept for the dead—

he did not see why, since they undoubtedly went immediately to heaven,—did I not think so? I assented vaguely. He himself was now on his way to church—not, as he was careful to inform me, for the sake of the curé's discourse, but simply "pour adorer." His faded blue eyes gleamed with patriotic and religious enthusiasm; his speech was fiery, despite his lack of teeth and country dialect, which at times made it hard for me to follow him. He will always stand out in my memory as the only enthusiast for the war I ever came across.

On Tuesday 22nd, those of us who had declined to sign the second contract were told we must leave for Boulogne the next day. "Tit Willow" and I paid a final visit to St Omer, accompanied by the "Sergeant-Major," from whom we were to part with bitter regret on the morrow. We ate omelettes sadly in the little dark shop opposite the "garage" church, which we often patronised, and which later was seriously damaged by a bomb. And so to bed—for the last time in the cool camp, before resuming our ordinary existence. I will not dwell on our departure, or the slow journey by train to Boulogne. I had a furious cold, and felt thoroughly miserable. Back in our old rooms at the Hotel Christol I shrank from the luxury of sheets, and went to bed in my beloved "flea-bag," much to the "Tit Willow's" amusement. Two days she

and I spent in Boulogne, chiefly in wandering about the docks as before, and then we left for England. Fourteen hundred men, released for five days' leave, belonging to all ranks and all regiments, bronzed and fit beyond imagination, crossed in the same boat with us. The Embarkation Officer had his work cut out, and our start was long delayed. A Canadian colour-sergeant on the second-class deck called ironic orders anent lost kit to a bewildered "Tommy" on shore; an irascible Major—so exactly like an irascible Major that you felt he could not be real—became vociferously agitated over the despatch of a telegram; a tactless soldier remarked that we should be a fine haul for a submarine,—and all the while more and yet more men came up the gangway, till every available space seemed occupied.

We got under way at last, and crossed the Channel at fair speed, casting grateful glances at the protecting destroyer whom we saw patrolling her watery beat with all the dignity of a London policeman.

Entering Folkestone harbour I said to "Tit Willow," "Shall we try to get off first, or wait till the men have landed?"

Next to me sat a grey-haired man in the uniform of a second-lieutenant, evidently a soldier who had obtained a commission from the ranks. Hearing my remark, he turned a rather sad, deeply-lined face to me, and said, "If you like, I will have the men kept back while you

get off, but they are so keen to get ashore I think they would jump into the water if anything delayed their landing."

Hurriedly we disclaimed any such privilege as that he offered, and with that he began to talk. He told us of his experiences till he came to Mons—and there he stopped. He had "been through it," he said, as though that explained all things. Between the men who shared "The Retreat" and others, there always seemed to be a very sharp distinction. I noticed the former appeared to take little interest in subsequent experiences, and were as men seared by a flame, yet without fear, having known the worst that could happen, and survived it.

As I pointed out to the "Tit Willow," the offer made to us to disembark in front of fourteen hundred homesick men was our last occasion for swank. No longer after to-day should we rank as members of the B.E.F., sharing its privileges and restrictions, alike akin to the "Tommy" who passed us with a friendly grin and the officer of the Headquarters Staff who saluted with grave courtesy despite his chronic air of outlived enthusiasms. From to-morrow we should be mere civilians once more—it was not altogether a pleasing reflection.

We gave up our passports and identity certificates on

landing. Our identity discs were not asked for, so we took them home as "souvenirs."

Home—bath—bed—liberty awaited us,—yet were we not entirely joyful. The comparative insouciance of London jarred after the attitude of stern concentration characteristic of France. And the recruiting placards made us sick. But "the way of Pillie Winkie's *not* the way of Winkie Pop," and perhaps it is futile to compare the methods of two nations in dealing with a crisis to the detriment of one.

Soon I slipped back into normal life, ceased to wake at 6.30 or wish to sleep at 10, soon forgot the song of the distant guns and the sight of a convalescent patient sitting up with a plate held before his face while he carefully licked its inner surface. Only after some months did these things and many others come back to me clearly, yet with their more painful aspects softened, and all I felt I could justly or discreetly say concerning them I have set down here. These are only personal impressions of a big job well and promptly tackled by our medical services in France. A side issue of the war, as aforesaid, but as much a British victory as many a more tangible fight mentioned in despatches. And it is good to have shared in it.

B. G. MURE.

SUNK.

BY R.N.V.

I.

SHE was an old battleship whose day of power was long past. At the great naval review held to celebrate the sixtieth year of Queen Victoria's reign, you might have seen her in one of the proudest stations of the Fleet; but when the Great War broke out hers was the least of the Battle Squadrons, and she herself a neglected unit at the very tail of British Sea Power, almost ready for the ship-breaker's yard. War brought her to life again and to a glorious end. Being one of the ships concerned in the much-discussed Test Mobilisation of the Third Fleet which took the place of Naval Manœuvres in 1914, she was unusually ready when war broke out: full complement on board, guns' crews less rusty than usual, and showing a remarkable turn of speed for a lady of her years, though slow as a dray compared with her younger sisters. In company with others of her age and kind she made part of that strange squadron, a motley of ancient and modern, headed by the greatest ship in the world, which won renown at the Dardanelles. Written off by the callous Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty as "of no military significance," she yet told her tale of shelling sound

and fury to the Turkish enemy in such a fashion as to make it signify some considerable damage to him, and to show that even the tail of our Sea Power had a good deal of nasty sting left in it.

One morning in May 1915 she entered the Straits, the last of five battleships in line ahead told off to support an advance of the troops on shore. With their guns trained on the European side they turned their backs, as it were, upon the Turkish batteries on the Asiatic shore, and when the latter began to bother them our ship was ordered to take station somewhere off Kum Kale and enfilade the Turkish position with her 12-inch guns. Steadily all day the booming of the guns sounded across the water and went echoing up the Hellespont: and, as if to prove that this was something more than Battle Practice at last, a spout of water would rise now and then not a cable's-length ahead and others of the same round about. Rarely, and even then without great effect, did enemy shells fall aboard; but they came near enough to keep the ship's company awake and lively all day. In the soft evening light the guns of this enfilading ship looked like long grey pencils, but where the lead should have

been there came ever and anon a red tongue that flashed and vanished: and after the red tongue a great cloud: and after the cloud a voice of thunder: and far up the Asiatic shore the shell found its mark. Then sunset came and put an end to the noisy day's work; and the ship took her night station under the lea of the European shore, put out her torpedo-netting anew like a great steel skirt, and lay awaiting the return of day. Darkness gathered about her with that sudden descent which surprises men from the north used to the long twilight of summer, and long before midnight land and sea were lost to view under the heavy cloak of a black starless sky.

The officer of the watch, a Royal Naval Reserve lieutenant from the Orkneys, peered into the night and listened to the low gurgle and murmur of the tide running strongly through the torpedo-netting and making the ship swing slowly to her anchor. And as he listened an old Orcadian rhyme came into his head—

"Eynhallow frank, Eynhallow free,
Eynhallow stands in the middle of
the sea;

With a roarin' roost on every side,
Eynhallow stands in the middle of
the tide."

So he stood: in the middle of another tide with a roarin' roost on every side, and a ship under his feet which seemed as firm as the Eynhallow rock itself. Little did he think that before dawn she would prove but a frail refuge. As little

did he realise that the campaign on which he was engaged was but the latest link in a long chain of stirring events that had made the Hellespont famous from the most distant times. Had he been of a reflective turn of mind he might have conjured up before him the whole matchless pageant of history that lies folded in those narrow waters: the Trojan scene: the oft-repeated passage of that great sea-river by conquerors from East and West: the glory of Byzantium and its decay: the prowess and cruelty of the Ottoman Turks: and all the lore of those waters of ancient memory. But he was a simple seaman from the merchant service, drawn into the service of the King at war, and no such high historic thoughts came to distract him from the duties of his watch.

Presently he was joined by another officer who came up from below for a breath of night air. They talked together for a while, recalling the incidents of the day's work, speculating upon the old theme of Ships *v.* Forts, pitying the "poor devils ashore" who were never out of fire, and wondering when Achi Baba would fall. They talked "shop" because there was nothing else to talk about; and though the subjects never varied, they never seemed to lose their zest. In every ward-room of the motley fleet assembled round the snout of the Gallipoli Peninsula, the same kind of talk might be

heard, varied a little in each ship, and always flavoured with the expressive service slang so beloved and so little understood by the Gentlemen of the Press who accompanied them. The officer of the watch and his companion continued their conversation in low tones for a while, and then stood for a moment silent. With a "Good night: I'm going to turn in," the latter had set his foot on the topmost rail of the steel ladder and was about to descend when a sudden exclamation arrested him. He turned.

"What's that?" said the officer of the watch in a sharp whisper.

"Where?"

"Over there," he pointed to the shore on the port side.

"I can't see a thing."

They strained their eyes, peering out into the night. They listened intently, but heard nothing except the murmuring tide now sounding its eerie accompaniment to the inaudible movement out of sight. They strained their ears; but neither sight nor hearing but some other uncanny sense was awake in them hinting of something about to happen.

The officer of the watch spoke again.

"I can't see a thing, and I can't hear anything; but I swear there's something moving out there." He pointed again to the European shore.

"Troops, perhaps?"

"Can't be; we'd have been warned."

They waited again in silence. How long they stood tense, neither could afterwards say: each second was a long agony of suspense. The eddying tide whispered and bubbled beneath them. A faint stirring of the night air caressed their faces. But to their anxious questions no answer came. In the deep shadow under the land there was a secret, holding life or death perhaps, a moving threat hidden in the night. But what it was? or whence? or why? they could not tell.

Suddenly the officer of the watch clutched his companion's arm.

"A destroyer. Look!"

Just where a gully dipped to the sea there was a patch where land and water met that was faintly luminous. It was not light: merely less black than the rest: but the contrast was enough to give the eye an impression of light. With bursting pulses the watch-keeper saw a long, low, black shape pass stealthily across the patch.

"Shall I challenge? It may be one of our 'Beagles' coming back from the Narrows. They went up towards Chanak, two of them, after dinner. I saw them."

"No; it can't be. They'd never come like that. You've had no signal from the Flag-ship?"

"No."

"Then it's *der Tag* for us, old man! Keep your eye on him, and I'll tell the skipper. You'd better pass the word for 'Action Stations'

to the port battery. We must be quick about it, and quiet; otherwise our number's up."

He went to rouse the captain. The officer of the watch made his preparations, watched his orders being swiftly and almost noiselessly carried out, and turned again to peer through the darkness. Two minutes passed. He inflated his "Gieve," and as he tucked away the tube, a faint splash was heard in the darkness away on the port-beam.

"God! A torpedo," he exclaimed.

He waited for the torpedo to strike—another long suspense: but within thirty seconds the splash was answered by a roar from the 4-in. port battery of his own ship. Tongues of flame leapt from the muzzles, lighting up the night, and the shells whistled to their all but invisible mark. But before they could fire another round, the torpedo struck. The ship quivered, a tremor running through every plate and rivet: her stern shivered like the hind-quarters of a dog coming out of water. Then she was heaved upwards by some monstrous power beneath. A great spout of water rose, and a great flame leapt out of the ship's belly with a deafening roar, sending its licking tongues high in the midnight sky. And all this was simultaneous: the quiver, the heave, the spout, and the flame were all blended in one vast, hot, terrifying chaos. A second explosion followed, rending the ship to her very vitals.

Guns, boats, men, all were flung into the air like leaves in a whirlwind: one of the steamboats was seen spinning like a blazing top a hundred feet up in the air. The great ship herself reeled over to port, hung awhile with her decks steep aslant, and then plunged with a terrible hiss and roar to the bottom. The spot where she had been was thick with men and *débris*, the awful flotsam of a torpedoed battleship now lit up by a searchlight's occasional gleam. The risk to other ships was too great at first to permit anything more than a momentary and fitful use of their welcome beams by the destroyers and auxiliary craft hastening to the rescue. Death might still lurk in the dark corners of the land on either side. And so, until the screening patrols had swept the strait, a wholesome caution shrouded the life-saving operations in gloom. Even without the pall of darkness the night was eerie enough. The cries of the injured men suffering agonies in the ice-cold water rang hideously through the still air; and though the work of rescue was well and quickly done as the picket-boats and trawlers nosed their way about, death was too often too quick for them; and of those that lived, even with all the despatch and skill of the rescuers, many a survivor suffered the tortures of the damned in a desperate struggle with the freezing cold and the still more freezing fear that in the confusion and

darkness he would not be picked up.

Two hours later the last searchlight had swept the eddying surface, the last picket-boat had returned. The sudden danger had passed, leaving a wreck in its track: and the

"Waters of Asia, westward-beating
waves
Of estuaries, and mountain-warded
straits,
Whose solitary beaches long had lost
The ashen glimmer of the dying day,
Listened in darkness to their own lone
sound
Moving about the shores of sleep. . . ."

II.

The following evening four officers sat at a bridge table in the deck smoking-room of an auxiliary lying in Mudros harbour. A burly merchant captain, wearing the woven stripes of a lieutenant-commander in the R.N.R. — the "tea-cosy" decoration, as a facetious merchant skipper once called it; his chief engineer, a good Scot, in great demand all over the harbour for his inexhaustible stock of yarns; a lieutenant-commander, R.N., rescued ten days before from a torpedoed battleship, and now awaiting "disposal"; and a King's messenger in the uniform of the Volunteer Reserve,—as well-mixed a foursome as ever played a hand. The call of war had brought them together from their vocations of peace and had dumped them temporarily in the good ship *Fauvette*, which was wont in happier times to ply a busy trade between London and Bordeaux. They had hardly dealt the cards for a second game when a movement on deck disturbed them, and before they could rise to ascertain the cause a troupe of strangely clad youngsters appeared at the door.

"May we come in, sir?" said one of them, who was, in sober truth, a "thing of shreds and patches."

"Make yourselves at home, boys," said the skipper, waving a chubby hand round the room.

A signalman entered with his pad, and handed it to the skipper.

"Gad! Of course," he cried, "you're the stowaways we've been expecting all day. Well, what's it like being torpedoed?"

There was silence. None of these midshipmen was adept at public speech in the presence of unknown superiors. So for the moment the skipper's question remained unanswered. As they settled in a group in the corner of the smoking-room they presented a fine study in motley. Every stitch on their backs had been borrowed from willing lenders. One waddled in the blue overalls of a benevolent but too burly friend; another looked like an example of record promotion, for there were three gold stripes half-concealed under the folded cuff of a sleeve that was a hand's-length too long for the wearer; a third wore the tweeds of a

war correspondent, who had doubtless exacted "copy" as interest on the loan of his clothes; and the rest of them, in various ways, completed the picture of incongruity. But for all that they had passed through one of the greatest ordeals of war, they showed but little sign of strain or fatigue, and only asked whether they might have something to smoke and whether they could write home. Their needs were supplied; and the skipper repeated his question—

"Come on and tell us what it's like being torpedoed."

"It's always the same," broke in the lieutenant-commander at the card-table. "A frightful din: and a bit of a shake an' a heave, and then you're in the water. Your 'Gieve' does the rest. That's all there is to it."

"*I wish to God it was,*" said a new hollow voice at the door. "I was on watch when the damned thing struck us, and I was in the water among the bodies for a hell of a time; and if that's all you knew when you're packet sank, you're lucky. Damned lucky!" he repeated slowly in a dull voice.

The figure in the doorway was at once familiar and strange, like that of a strong man grown suddenly wizened. He was visibly shrunken: and as he walked unsteadily across the room and sat down on a swivel-seat, he talked continuously but almost incoherently, half to himself and half to the watching group. The contrast

between him and the unscathed midshipmen was very strong and unexpected. He and they had come from the same ship, passed through the same night of alarm, and been hauled out of the same cold waters by the same rescuing hands. The experience had set no mark upon the boys: yet in the grown man it had wrought such a sea-change as made one almost fear to look at him. His tanned cheeks were still brown, but it was a bloodless tint; and the lines that seamed his face gave him a sepulchral look. His eyes alone were bright—too bright. The softer quality that makes the human eye so expressive was gone, and there remained a vivid stare as of eyes straining to see the invisible. There he was, in our company, but certainly not of it: for his brain was working and wandering whither we could not follow, and the words that came from his lips were the half-automatic expression of an absent mind. "Gimme a cig'et," he said with the husky slurred articulation of a drunk man: and he sat puffing and biting the end of it into pulp. Then he would grip the short arms of his seat, start up and look downwards between his knees, and then sit down again with a look of shamed annoyance. He was clearly struggling to get away from something, and we were powerless to help.

We tried to distract him. The steward brought a tray loaded with sandwiches and

drinks, which he refused. We were getting a little uneasy about our strange guest; the doctor whom the skipper had sent for was long in coming, and each renewal of our efforts to divert the patient failed. We gave him the 'Bystander' and 'Punch,' but he was beyond the reach of Bairnsfather and George Morrow: we tried to draw him into a game at the table—poker, bridge, patience, anything—but he remained immovable.

At last the doctor, a thick-set bearded Fleet Surgeon, came and took charge, and reversed our procedure. Where we had been gentle, almost timid, he was rough. Where we had coaxed, he ordered. Where we had fumbled and faltered with the unknown, he acted with the confidence of experience. After a rapid examination and cross-examination, in the course of which he drew more from his victim in five minutes than we had extracted in an hour and more, he hustled him below and packed him into a bunk with various aids to sleep which he did not specify. Then the Fleet Surgeon returned to the smoking-room.

"You're a bright lot," he said; "why didn't you put him to bed at once? He's absolutely done: but if he can sleep, he'll be all right soon. Never seen a man quite so worn out."

"Do you mean to say that he's only tired? He looked like going off his chump."

"So would you if your nerves had been living on shocks with-

out any solid support. What he went through has got such a hold on him that until he's had a good twenty-four hours' sleep as a preliminary and a course of feeding up and regular sleep without any work to do after that, he won't quite know where he is. But I bet he's sitting up and taking nourishment this time tomorrow. He was on the verge of being a bad case, but we've caught him just in time."

The doctor was right. Our patient slept till midday next day, took a light meal and slept again till sunset. Then he awoke and dined; but in an hour he was asleep again. Clearly he had been put to bed at the psychological moment. By the following afternoon he was taking the air in a deck-chair, and ready—perhaps a little too ready, for his health—to talk about the sinking of his ship.

When the explosion occurred he was thrown clear of the ship on the starboard side. He was half-stunned, but his swimming waistcoat kept him afloat. The rest must be told in his own words.

"I don't know how long it was before I realised where I was: but it was long enough to let me get pretty cold. You know what the water's like. I picked up two men close by me, still swimming, but pretty nearly done. Neither of them had belts on. One, I knew by his voice, was a ward-room steward. They hung on to me for a while,

the 'Gieve' keeping us all afloat so long as we made a bit of an effort ourselves. We could hear the picket-boats going about, and sometimes a searchlight picked us up; but nothing came near enough to rescue us. And before long one of the fellows hanging on to me began to groan and his teeth chattered. I told him to keep moving: but it was no good. He slipped off, and I never saw him again. That was bad enough: but when the other fellow's teeth began the same game, I got the creeps; but I couldn't save him, and after a few moments he went too. It was a ghastly feeling. The sudden silence, and the cold creeping right into me made me want to give up too: when

suddenly I thought I had touched bottom. I tried to walk, but the thing I touched slipped away: and I realised with a shudder what it was. And after that I swear I must have touched a dozen of them before I was picked up. That's what knocked me out. But, I say, let's chuck it. I must get away from it."

He passed his hand over his face. The old troubled look came back: and for the moment I could see that, like Orestes pursued by the Furies, his spirit was haunted by the ghosts of the men whose bodies his feet had touched in the dark waters of the Hellespont. He had indeed suffered a sea-change: and the war was over for him.

ON THE FRINGE OF THE WORLD WAR.

I. A TRAGEDY IN PERSIA.

IT was through the streets of the ancient city of "Hadji Baba" that we jolted to call on the charming wife of the Russian Consul, on Monday, May —th, 1915.

The Cossack guard, with sheepskin fez, drew to attention and saluted as we passed out of the dusty heated street, made still hotter in our vicinity by the beggars, always numerous at our hospitable Ally's Consulate. Quickly we slipped through the spacious courtyard, up the steps into the cool shade of a Persian garden, to the right of which lay the tennis-court, not indeed of green sward, but a smooth khaki floor, as though one of the high mud walls had fallen flat and been rolled and white-lined for the game.

The court was already occupied, so we sat and chatted with our hostess, secretly admired her frock and figure, drank tea and a refreshing home-made currant-wine, and gradually brought ourselves into touch with our fellow-guests.

"What's the news?"

This was the invariable question we asked of one another as we met, for was it not May 1915, and were not eager hearts stretching for tidings from the dear Homeland? Beneficent Reuter flashed the chief events through *via* India, and by the British Minister's kindness

European residents were privileged to read it, otherwise news would have been a month old, and what might not happen in that time?

"Is there any bazaar news?"

"Yes! The Belgian Customs official is recalled to Teheran, and there is a difficulty between Von K—— and the Germans over some of the villages. Von K—— was the Russian Vice-Consul, manager of the Russian Bank, and steward of the estates of a Prince of the Royal House, now exiled from the Empire. He spoke English fairly well, was a great admirer of our beloved land, and his only son had been tutored by a young Englishman of Rugby and Oxford, who had hoped to take the lad home. But Antwerp had fallen, and the young Britisher had left post-haste to "do his bit."

I turned to look at Monsieur P—— and Von K——, for they were earnestly conversing some few feet away: the former, short, dark, thick-set; the latter, tall, fair, well-formed, with gentle eyes, which made one doubt the rumours of severity with natives. His face was pale, tense, and drawn, as he rolled out his voluble French. Some anxiety seemed to be particularly pressing him, and I inquired of my neighbour if his wife, who had left the city some weeks before, in

a poor state of health, had arrived at Petrograd.

The games were over, the sun had quickly set, and the small European community, glad of the cool evening breeze, separated, little dreaming of the tragic blow which was so soon to fall on one of its members.

It was Wednesday midnight. Our house, some twenty minutes' walk from the city's centre, usually escaped what little din was countenanced by the authorities. I woke with a sudden start. Every dog seemed to be barking his loudest, and from one quarter to another the seeming ceaseless chain of sound was wafted.

What could it mean? I sat bolt upright and listened.

Gradually the noise subsided and I sank to sleep once more, but not for long.

Bang! bang! bang! rang through the house.

"What is it?" I questioned wonderingly.

"I must go at once," replied my husband, as the bangs at the door were renewed with greater violence. Quickly he flung on a dressing-gown, and with a warning not to open the door without making some inquiries, I heard him call out "Who is it? What work have you?" using the Persian idiom.

"Is this the doctor's house?" bawled the man.

"Why? what do you want?"

"We are the soldiers from the Russian Consulate and want the doctor."

"What has happened?"

"The Russian Bank manager

has been shot at midnight, and we want the doctor."

So poor Von K—— was probably dying, were my husband's thoughts as he directed the men to the doctor's house, and returned. Then this was the meaning of the city's dogs' terror.

"What news would the morning bring?"

It was quite true. There had been a farewell dinner at the Russian Consulate in honour of the departing Belgian. Von K—— had offered to drive the honoured guest home, and in passing through one of the principal gates of the city had been shot dead. The police had been near, but the assassin escaped into the doors of the combined Turkish and German Consulate, opposite which the deed was done.

The Belgian jumped out and escaped to his house. The driver whipped up his horse, but a masterless carriage drove to the home of Von K——, for his body was found a while after and carried back to the house he had recently left so happy a guest.

There was a funeral the following day. The streets were lined with a silent populace; the roofs crowded with veiled women, and the roads guarded by gendarmes. A subtle sense of bewilderment as to what these things might mean for Persia pervaded the place.

"What could these things mean?" was the question in every eye. None could tell.

It was some little time after

the funeral that I asked if a shock, she died on hearing Madam Von K—— had heard it.”
 the sad news; only to receive Two more children were the reply, “It was too great orphans.

II. A REGRETTABLE RIDE.

To own a mount, and make good use of him to quickly leave the narrow heated streets for the river-bed or the desert beyond, is one of the pleasures of our small European community. Some bestir themselves at an early hour, especially during the summer, when the only opportunity for experiencing a little freshness in the dry air is before sunrise.

The summer heat of 1915 had been somewhat belated, and it was not until the middle of June that we really felt very uncomfortable from 11 A.M. But the “Chehilhum bozurg,” or 40 days of greatest heat, began at the summer solstice, and each day grew less tolerable.

So unvarying is the Persian climate that the native divides his year into a series of 40 days, and prophesies the weather pretty accurately. The Chehilhum bozurg is followed by Chehilhum kurcheek, or 40 days of lesser heat, when the thermometer descends slightly. Then the cool 40 days come, when there is a notable change of temperature. This goes on until the descent to the winter solstice, when the Chehilhum bozurg of greatest cold sets in.

Rain and snow, too, are timed to fall at a certain date, which is seldom far out, and

even the winds seem to obey a regular behest. The gentle rushing sound which can be heard in the distance, as one treads the path in the still garden at springtime, is the voice of the zephyr which will presently sway every branch, whispering to each bud that it is time to awake. A marvellous change indeed follows as the buds respond to the wooing. Almond, peach, plum and cherry, apricot and pear, clothe themselves in gaudy array ready for their bridal. “The wind that opens the bud” has indeed accomplished its work with splendour!

The sudden breezes of late autumn are sent to lay the already weakened leaves to mother earth to rest, but they had not arrived, and only a few leaves were amber, as early one morning in the first week of September our Consul-General set out of town to benefit by the exhilarating desert air. He was accompanied by some of the Consulate Indian Guard, not so much for protection as prestige.

Mr X—— was profoundly respected by the Persians, not only on account of his office (the Persians have a very real friendliness and affection for Britain; how often have they said, “Why don’t you English come and do for us what you

have done for Egypt?"), but for his own personal qualities. His linguistic ability was remarkable, and he combined a conscientious devotion to duty, with such a punctilious observance of the amenities of life, as made him an example to the whole community. He was a horseman of no mean attainment. On that September morning he sent one of the sowars to the English Telegraph Office while he kept one other to accompany him to the desert.

It was on his return journey that the event occurred. The two were riding at walking pace, just near the house which was used by the gendarmes for a hospital, when a man in the garb of a Persian peasant, who had been ordered to step on one side, suddenly turned round as Mr X—— approached, and fired point-blank at both riders. The Indian fell mortally wounded, but mercifully the shot meant for the Consul passed between the arm and the right side, causing comparatively little damage. He was able to gallop off immediately to the Consulate to secure aid for the wounded Indian.

But it was too late. The poor fellow breathed his last as he was carried into the garden of the Church Missionary Society's Hospital, near where the crime had been committed. The doctor hurried to see Mr X——, who, after the dressing of the wound, attended to the many calls upon his time.

That morning I had particularly noticed an oppressive silence over the city; there was an absence of sound even more noticeable than on the most solemn Moslem fast-day. My husband set out as usual, but I was startled by hearing his cycle bell in less than half an hour afterwards as he re-entered the compound to tell me of the startling event.

He paid a call of sympathy on the Consul the day after, and, as he was leaving, commiserated with the remaining Indian guard on the loss of one of their number.

"Any of us would have been proud to die in defending our Consul Sahib," was the proud, astonishing, and totally unexpected reply. Britain's Empire can never die while such testimony can be borne to her sons!

III. A SUDDEN SEND-OFF.

To all outward appearances our life in Central Persia at the opening of 1915 seemed almost as patriarchal as ever. Certainly one motor did occasionally hoot, and one motorcycle throb, along the rugged streets, giving much concern to a shying mule or supercilious

camel. The peasant ploughed his land and sowed his seed, doubtless ruminating over news of a war which seemed as though it could never reach his fields.

An undefinable uneasiness at times crept over me; "Have your house in order, you never

know what might happen," it seemed to say. So persistently did this "inner consciousness" return that there was nothing to do but calmly obey it, and in those early months boxes were sorted and their contents methodically arranged and numbered. Stores in "ambars" were planned and a clear bird's-eye view of one's possessions mentally fixed.

"I can take my holiday in peace," I remarked, "for all is in order; if it should come to some sudden happening I am as ready as it is humanly possible to be."

At times I called myself foolish, especially as I thought of a friend's letter which said, "How safe you are from bombs and submarines."

When September came, however, the foolishness proved to be a merciful premonition for preparedness, which drew forth profound thankfulness.

It was a grave head of the household who walked his cycle into the compound a day or two after the Consul-General had been shot at, and said, "The British Government have ordered all Allied subjects to leave the city as speedily as matters can be arranged."

"It won't take me long to prepare; all is in order."

"The parties have been planned, we cannot all go at once."

"When may we order the carriage for Teheran?"

"Carriage for Teheran? There's no going that way unless you travel luggage-less and go to-day. The Russians must take that road to their

own land, and we Britishers must go south to avoid a jam."

"South? But we can't, the Shiraz-Bushire road is unsafe, through German intrigue."

"There's the Ahwaz road, and we are to take that."

"That?" I echoed. "However shall I get through? For the strongest that road is a nightmare."

I had left England, after several years of illness, with strict medical orders to attempt no rough travelling, and here was the roughest and steepest of roads to be taken, with no alternative. My husband went on with his duties, for the time was short and there was much to do. I turned my attention to the house, and quietly ordered the servant to dismantle various rooms, packed goods in the "ambars," and then began to fill boxes. "How thankful I am for my 'clairvoyance,'" I murmured to myself—"at any rate I am confusionless."

Ladies had been ordered not to leave their houses, so any urgent message had to be written in the midst of much busy-ness.

We all felt weirdly far away from one another, yet so near! All going, yet with no good-bye calls! I sent messages to some of my Persian lady friends and walked through the garden to see those in the "anderun" portion of our house now occupied by the owner, and which could be reached without going into the street.

The new bride (I had been at her wedding three months before), and the older ladies, greeted me with the usual

phrases, "Peace be upon you," "In the name of God enter," "Your place is very empty."

They brought out tea in their best tea-glasses with silver holders, and although I could ill spare the time, I had to be entertained and tell the news!

"You are packing up." "Why?" "Why are you going?" "You are quite safe here."

"Oh, we are not afraid. Our King, through his Government, has told us to leave your city, and we must obey."

"But there is no need for you to go."

"Don't you understand? Some one in your city shot at our Consul-General. He represents our King. He has been dishonoured. We cannot stay. You must learn to treat our King's representative with respect. We should not shoot your Shah's representative in England."

Still they urged me not to go, and as a final appeal said: "You keep the house so very very clean and beautiful, we do want you to stay."

So there was some self-interest in their pleading—the care of their property! I smiled and thanked them for their good opinion and wishes, and not without some sadness bade them farewell.

"God be with you," they called. "To God we commit you," I heard them murmur as I left the sunny compound, to plunge once more into travelling plans.

My husband had also been saying farewell that afternoon,

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and one leave-taking had deeply impressed him. He had visited a Persian friend whose home was near—a tall, handsome man, with those aquiline features so constantly found in the better class of Persian. At one time he had been Governor of a well-known town on the Gulf; at another the chief of the city's police, but his friends lamented that he was too honest for that post to bring him the wealth it should have done. He was a passionate patriot, had a keen insight into affairs, and read, spoke, and wrote English with ease. He received my husband with gentle courtesy, but without a vestige of his usual brightness and cheer. He spoke of the British occupation of Bushire somewhat bitterly, and nothing would convince him of its necessity.

"It seems as though we shall have to fight both English and Russians," he remarked.

"How can you? You have no army, no guns."

"Yes, I know we should lose, but we should be all the better friends afterwards." He then expressed great sorrow at the order to leave, and with deep emotion declared: "I feel I shall never smile again, to think that an English Consul has been fired upon in I——. It can't have been a Persian: it must have been a German or Austrian in Persian peasant's garb."

He begged to be allowed to do something for us, and sent a letter after my husband

saying Adieu, and wishing us a safe journey—once more requesting to be of some service.

As I look back upon those days, I wonder how we pressed so much into them—arranging, packing, selling. Our horse and donkey, sheep and chickens, had to be speedily sold, besides perishable stores—all at what price we could get, and the Persian loves a bargain!

At last we were ready!

Beds and bedding, cooking-pots and food, folding chairs, and a flimsy bell-tent to afford some shelter from the burning sun during the day—for travelling would have to be at night so early in the autumn—were all ready for the animals.

My husband was to ride a mule, on each side of which was slung a saddle-bag and the centre piled with bedding!—a comparatively comfortable but somewhat elevated seat. I had prepared a pair of “kajavehs” for our boy of three and myself.

A kajaveh. What is it? Take a large dog kennel, big enough for the largest re-

triever, knock out the entire front and make a curved instead of a pointed roof. Cover it with waterproof paper and maroon cotton damask, and there you have our “car,” in which we resided for at least one-third of each of nineteen somewhat tedious days. Two were bound together by ropes of goats’ hair and then slung on each side of the strongest mule. But I am getting on too fast. The kajavehs and mules were not to be used for the first stage—it was a smooth road, so we decided to drive.

We said good-bye to the canary and the dog, giving them over to their caretakers: we turned to shake hands with the friends and dependants near, then jumped into the rickety hired droschky, which was to be our last luxury for some days to come. We passed, seemingly unnoticed, out of the city, through the Armenian quarter, past the “tower house” where we had spent so restful a holiday only a month before. The setting sun beat into the carriage. We sat silent, with thoughts too deep for words!

IV. A MEMORABLE JOURNEY.

It was quite dark when we drove into the side lane in which our lodging for the night was situated. The other members of the party—a family of parents and two small children, and two single ladies—had left the city earlier. They had kindly seen to the

preparation of our evening meal, and after putting the tiny ones to bed, we sat down under the stars to feast on cold chicken. Every one was very tired and glad to retire to rest, or at least to try to do so between the intervals of donkeys’ chorus, for many were

tethered in the yard just beneath our bedroom windows.

The servants called us at 2 A.M., and after some breakfast we packed our beds and bedding, besides seemingly endless other paraphernalia, and went out into the narrow street to see the animals loaded, and make certain that the kajavehs and palaquis (two smaller kajavehs slung on a donkey for two children) were properly balanced. I was lifted into mine, which went up seesaw fashion when the man-servant and baby boy were seated in the other. The servant was short and of light weight, but some adjustment was necessary before all was equalised. Finally, a heavy stone was slung on to my "car" and we began our jolting, to ameliorate which the inside of the kajavehs were well padded with pillows and cushions. These did not tend to coolness, but that or comparative comfort had to be sacrificed.

We dismounted for luncheon at about 11 A.M., and afterwards pursued our monotonous desert way until 4 P.M., when we sighted a pretty village on one side of which was a stream and rice-field, and on the other an excellent camping-ground, firm and clean, which had evidently been prepared by the villagers for passing travellers.

The afternoon sun had been, to say the least, too decidedly hot, and our gratitude can be imagined when the servant announced the samovar ready, and that spelt tea. We were agreeably surprised by the first

day's venture, and apart from some stiffness and weariness had managed better than we expected. Our boxes were piled in the centre of the camping-ground, and the two tents (ours merely a seaside bathing variety), servants, and armed guards at various intervals round. The armed guards accompanied us one stage and then were replaced by another set. They were supposed to keep off thieves, but they were rogues themselves, and it was really a case of setting a thief to catch a thief.

The next two or three days were similar in events, and along smooth road. One was becoming accustomed to the helplessness of one's elevated position, especially helpless when the muleteer flung the single chain which guarded the animal into the kajaveh and fled beyond earshot to smoke and chat with his brother. I protested again and again at the treatment, only to be met by a cynical smile and assured that the mule was quite safe.

It certainly did need some assurance, especially when the mule lowered his head to touch the ground in order to ease his neck of the pressure of the kajaveh. He bent that shelter at such an angle as threatened to toss us, without ceremony, immediately in front of his nose. As the road was steadily becoming more difficult, a passing traveller, who was making the journey on foot, was hired on condition that the chain never left his hand.

I had some difficulty in keeping him to his bargain, but his presence made the helpless sitting less of a strain, especially in the very precipitous parts which we were presently to experience.

It was after luncheon one day that we traversed our first "kotal" or rocky shoulder of a mountain-range. The occupants of kajavehs and palaquis were ordered to descend from their perches, riders dismounted from their mules, and grown-ups were told to walk, while the three children were carried. My husband knew that to walk on such a road was a physical impossibility for me, so I was hoisted on to the quietest animal, and we began the ascent of a circuitous series of narrow steps worn in the rocks. On one side they formed a wall some six to eight feet high, and as the empty kajavehs grated and bumped and swayed and rocked, one could but realise the wisdom of the muleteers' orders. At last the highest point was reached and we curved round to descend, a process which was even more perilous and jolting than the ascent, for it seemed as though one could not escape slipping from the bedding down in front of the animal whose back made such acute angles. But we did gain more level ground, and then I was told I could sit in my car once more. It was a helpless piece of humanity, however, which was lifted off the mule, and after lying on the ground for some little time,

to allow the body to recover from the terrible shaking, my husband lifted me into the kajaveh. It was not until the end of the journey that he told me I had immediately fainted, and lay back as though lifeless for the rest of the stage. Pure air, I suppose, gradually revived me, and I was able to continue the next day; not, indeed, over "kotals," but on roads precipitous, where one could keep in the car, and even though the path was so narrow that one kajaveh hung sheer over precipices dipping hundreds of feet, and where one false step or a sudden stampede would have meant a hurl to certain death.

There were wooded valleys, entirely green, some where the trees were made more vivid by a background of red earth; some with the tender green of the rice-plant. Each day brought a new view. Deep gorges, to be zigzagged down one side and zigzagged up the other. One looked in amazement when the foot of some heights were reached, for it seemed impossible that such a straight wall could have been traversed. Never, however, shall I forget one panorama which broke, nay, smote (so sudden was the change), on my sight.

It was one midday when a sharp turn revealed such a view of the Creator's wonderful work as bowed one's spirit in awe. We were on a great height of a bare and rocky range; below us spread hill after hill, studded with low and shady trees—the oak forests which we were told

we should pass through—all backed by a tremendous khaki wall of rock, seemingly touching the sky, and in the crevices of which snow still lingered. With an exclamation of joyous surprise, I delightedly dwelt on the scene: the sun, the earth, the trees, the heights, all spoke of glory!

It would take some days to reach the farthest limit, and we were to camp often in those valleys, and then, so I heard the muleteer say, we should reach the "Kotal of the Pearl," which ran over that seemingly impassable height. Each difficult part we had travelled we had been assured that it was as nothing to the famous "Pearl Pass." So we possessed our souls in patience, and revived ourselves for a supremely final effort. After that our perilous way descended to the Plain of Malamir, which had so often been the tramping-ground of armies, and which extended to the head of the Persian Gulf itself.

One or two thrilling incidents occurred before that pass was reached.

At the end of one stage we descended for our camp into a gorge flanked by high rocks. It was a veritable oven even in the night, but as water flowed through it was decided to put up with the disadvantage of temperature. The next morning we ascended the narrow road, only to begin to descend immediately. We were a tremendous party, some three hundred animals, for we had been joined by others for safety's sake.

There we were, one long streamthreading a limited space, jutting rocks on one side, sloping rocky earth on the other. The animals seemed in one long entanglement, and the muleteer, evidently scenting danger, came and took the chain of my mule. The muddle seemed less likely to clear, so I demanded that my boy and myself should be lifted down. As this involved some extra trouble, the man scorned my fears and derisively remarked to a fellow-countryman, "This lady has no heart," meaning that I lacked courage. It was not a pleasant phrase, but heart or no heart, I insisted upon descent. At last he yielded, and we gratefully pressed Mother Earth.

Scarcely had I been out three minutes when a mule laden with heavy and projecting boxes stamped past; one box passed under the kajaveh, lurched to free itself, and in so doing lifted our conveyance completely off the animal.

Grateful, indeed, I was that the possession of "no heart" had led to caution, or neither the man-servant, child, or myself would probably have lived to tell the tale.

The incident saved me from any further insinuation of cowardice, and the muleteer's estimation of a mere woman changed somewhat when my husband told him that his "gold" was in those kajavehs, and that they must be carefully guarded. The idea of a man's wife being his wealth greatly amused the caravan, and I constantly heard myself alluded to as the "Chief's gold."

We passed over "The Pearl" without exciting incident, but it was on a comparatively level piece of road that we had a rather perilous adventure. The kajavehs were swaying along in the moonlight after a rather trying spell, when suddenly the mule stumbled and our cars fell over his head, flat on their fronts, burying us completely. Mercifully he never budged until they were straightened and we descended. Our resting-place was near, so I walked the remaining way, too shaken and nervous to resume my seat.

Another time the animal turned as we were passing a tree, and a thick branch lodged itself inside my car. The mule tried to drag himself away, leaving us in mid-air. We were rescued just in time!

Our camping-places became worse as we neared the Gulf; they were mere open enclosures, thick with stable refuse, which covered one with dirt and dust every time there came a breath of heated air.

But our trials were nearly over, and the last level stage brought us to our own British

community living at Ahwaz. They welcomed us into their houses, and helped us to forget the trials of the way. Mr Coffey, the manager of the Ahwaz branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia; Mr Wilson, Messrs Lynch's representative; Mr Hedges of the Indo-European Telegraph Department; and the officials of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, all excelled in kindness and hospitality.

For several days fresh "refugees" arrived. The Consular party were the last. They told us of an incident which had amused them some few stages out of I——. The Consul-General paid a visit to a friendly chief whose house was near. Judge of his surprise to find a party of Germans actually in the reception-room. He had left them in I——, but with usual "make-sure" policy they had somehow managed to win the race, evidently in the hope of stirring up enmity where friendliness had been, thus making the journey more difficult for the British.

Their mission was a failure.

ELIZABETHAN TRAVEL LITERATURE.

To a generation which counts globe-trotting among its hobbies there may not seem any obvious connection between travel and war; but in earlier times, when merely to leave one's native shore was an adventure, and disease, starvation, robbery, and murder were among the ordinary risks of a long journey by sea or land, the two enterprises had more in common—so much indeed that to the Elizabethans it did not seem incongruous to include in a book of travels an account of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. History had already given them examples of the way in which war and travel might be connected. The Crusaders went to the East to fight, but, the fighting over, many remained to trade, while others penetrated farther afield to visit remote and unknown lands. Later, when adventurers turned to the New World in quest of trade and discovery, they found that their right to pursue these aims had to be won by armed force. The transition was an easy one, because, down to the sixteenth century at any rate, the qualities required by a traveller and a soldier were very much the same—qualities which may be summed up in Stevenson's phrase, "a taste for high and heroic forms of excitement." The increased safety and comfort of modern life have reduced to a minimum the occa-

sions which arouse such a feeling, and it has needed a war, plunging us into new and unprecedented conditions and bringing us face to face with undreamt-of dangers, to give us something of the same outlook on life as our forefathers had in the days of Elizabeth. This year, the tercentenary of the death of Hakluyt, seems a fitting time to consider in detail the way in which our present conditions resemble those which he describes, and differ from those which prevailed three years ago. We must not, of course, labour the point unduly: some of the resemblances may be due merely to coincidence, and not to the fact that we are at war; but it will probably be admitted that, whereas our chief feeling on reading Hakluyt's 'Voyages' a few years ago was an amazed admiration at the exploits recorded, to-day it is rather a sympathetic interest, a recognition of the kinship between us and our ancestors, which enables us to appreciate their point of view. Zeppelins and submarines have made us familiar with dangers as great as any they experienced, and even the exploits of Drake and Raleigh no longer seem incredible since we have read the story of Mons and Suvla Bay.

The limits of "Elizabethan Travel Literature" are difficult to define, for nearly all the writers of the period were to

some extent inspired by the recent discoveries. Shakespeare, when he uses nautical illustrations, makes Othello entertain Desdemona with tales of distant lands, or refers to the "still-vexed Bermoothes" and the "map with the augmentation of the Indies"; Marlowe, describing the conquests of Tamburlaine and the boundless ambitions of Faustus; Spenser, Daniel, Drayton, Chapman, and many others, who have more definite references to contemporary discovery,—all show the influence in various ways. If we confine ourselves to travel literature as such, however, there is one writer whose name stands out above all the rest—Richard Hakluyt, whose collection, 'The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation,' was published in 1589. Thirty-six years later, Samuel Purchas, who had helped Hakluyt in the collection of his material, issued a supplementary volume called 'Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes.' All the most important works of travel of the sixteenth century—such as those of Raleigh, Eden, Coryat, and Sandys—are included, or quoted from, in these two collections. Beginning with such legendary exploits as a voyage of Arthur, King of Britain, to which the date 517 is assigned, they trace the history of travel through the Middle Ages down to their own time. In dealing with the achievements of his contemporaries, Hakluyt's method, which was generally fol-

lowed by Purchas also, is to give the accounts of voyages and adventures in the words of those who took part in them, merely editing them to the extent of selecting the important parts and leaving out the unessential. He has thus been the means of preserving for us the log-books and journals of many discoverers whose adventures would otherwise be lost in oblivion; for there were few who, like Raleigh, aspired to literary fame themselves, and not many whose exploits, like Drake's, made sufficient stir in an age of great achievements to inspire others to write about them. Indeed, Purchas says that the "worthy mariners" whose doings he relates "are so farre from taking any of these things to their owne praise or glory, that some of them have ever done their best to suppress them from being printed."

It must be confessed that in dealing with material of an earlier date, Hakluyt and Purchas show nothing of the critical spirit in which modern students would approach it, but quote from mediæval writers like Geoffrey of Monmouth and Sir John Mandeville as if they were entirely trustworthy. It is only natural, however, that at a time of so many discoveries the most extravagant stories should be believed. It had been proved that the earth, apparently flat, was in reality a globe round which a ship might sail; a new continent had been discovered where generations of

men had believed there was only sea; none of the wonders of this new world could be more astonishing than its very existence. We may smile, from the heights of our superior knowledge, at the simplicity of those who believed the travellers' tales of men with no heads, and similar marvels; but, even in these enlightened days, let the ordinary channels of news be temporarily closed, and our ready acceptance of the most fantastic rumours shows that in the matter of credulity we differ not a whit from our ancestors.

The sixteenth century was pre-eminently an age of experiment; so many strange things had already come to pass that nothing could be regarded as certain, and the most reckless ventures seemed to have a chance of success. We are living in much the same circumstances to-day. We, too, have had to learn how to adapt ourselves to changed conditions, and we have done so in much the same spirit as the Elizabethans did; there is the same freshness of interest in the novelty of it all, combined with a matter-of-fact composure which refuses to be disturbed by the unknown. In our motives, too, there is the same mingling of lofty idealism with practical self-interest. We are told on the one hand that we are fighting to defend the liberties of small nations, and on the other that our aim is to capture Germany's trade. It may be that we are a race which needs the combination of these two motives to inspire

us to great achievements. The Elizabethan sailors, at any rate, were not mere visionaries; their voyages had a very definite object, which was the discovery of a short sea-passage to the riches of the East. The desire for wealth, however, could not alone fill men with the resolute courage to persevere in the face of all obstacles, and the stubborn pride which thought it a disgrace to abandon an enterprise once begun. This was the spirit in which Cavendish swore to sink his ship with all hands rather than be so "infamous and beggarly" as to turn back with his mission unaccomplished; and Chancellor, thinking that nothing could be more dishonourable than "for feare of danger to avoyd and shun great attempts," determined "either to bring that to passe which was intended, or else to dye the death." The prestige of their country and their religion was at stake, as well as personal glory; and they found no difficulty in reconciling this sentiment of patriotism and self-respect with their dreams of finding El Dorado, or their more practical satisfaction at the capture of treasure-laden galleons. Their varied motives are well set forth in the instructions issued by the Muscovy Company to Jonas Poole, master of the barque *Elizabeth*: "So carrie yourselfe in the businesse . . . as God may be glorified, our Countrey benefited, yourselfe credited, and we in our desires satisfied."

It was natural that at such

a time the whole nation, whether inspired by patriotic or mercenary motives, should turn its eyes seaward, and realise the importance of naval power as much as we do to-day. "Now for the services of the Sea," says Purchas, "they are innumerable; it is the great Purveyor of the World's Commodities to our use, Conveyor of the Excesse of Rivers, Uniter by Traffique of all nations; it is an open field for Merchandise in Peace, a pitched field for the most dreadfull fights of Warre; . . . mayntayneth (as in our Iland) a Wall of Defence and waterie Garrison to guard the State"—with much more to the same effect. A similar view is expressed more concisely in a fifteenth-century poem quoted by Hakluyt, entitled "*Libel [i.e., little book] of English Policy.*"

"The ende of battaile is peace sikerly,
And power causeth peace finally.
Kepe then the sea that is the wall of
England :
And then is England kept by Goddes
hande."

The writer deplores the commercial privileges we have allowed other nations to gain, urges statesmen not to give up the advantages of sea-power, and realises the possibilities of a blockade in time of war.

"And if they would be our full enemies,
They should not passe our stremes
with merchandise;
. . . Without wich they may not live
at ease.
Thus must hem sterve, or with us
must have peace."

It is true that the chief enemies whose rivalry he fears are Holland and Spain, and

that an integral part of his policy consists in the possession of Calais by the English, but these are details; in all essentials his advice is as sound to-day as at any period of our history. There could hardly be a better motto for an island nation than is contained in the following couplet:

"Cherish marchandise, keepe the
admiraltie;
That we bee Masters of the narrowe
see."

Hakluyt quotes from other interesting documents which prove that this policy was acted on at a very early date. An extract from the Saxon laws, of about the eighth century, shows that a merchant who had "passed thrise over the wide seas, of his owne craft," obtained the rank of a thane. He also gives a list of the English fleet before Calais in the time of Edward III., which consisted of 700 ships, manned by 14,151 mariners, while the sum total of "Estrangers their ships and mariners" was 38 ships and 805 men. It is interesting to notice, however, that of the English fleet only twenty-five were "the King's ships"; the rest were provided by the various seaports, Yarmouth heading the list with forty-three, and London coming fifth with twenty-five. Purchas gives an account of an expedition sent in 1620 against the Algerian pirates, who seem to have been as elusive as German commerce-raiders. On this occasion the English fleet, of which the flagship was

the *Lion* ("burden sixe hundred tuns, men two hundred and fiftie, Peeces of Brasse Ordnance forty"), consisted of eighteen ships in all, only six belonging to the Navy.

The part played by merchant ships in these expeditions is remarkable, in view of what is taking place to-day. A few years ago we looked on the Navy as a highly-specialised profession, and discussed the status and rights of merchantmen as a thing apart; but now that we have heard of a Cunard liner towing a disabled warship out of action, and find fishing-trawlers dignified by the title of His Majesty's Ships, we have almost returned to the times when any one who owned a vessel hastened to place it at the Queen's service, so that the fleet which defeated the Spanish Armada was more than half composed of privateers. Indeed, Elizabeth's reluctance to risk her ships in battle was so marked that in 1592 the Earl of Cumberland, starting on an expedition to Porto Rico, preferred not to use the "ships royal," but approached certain merchants whom he found more enterprising. These merchantships went armed, as ours do now, for they never knew when they might meet an enemy. Of their exploits it is unnecessary to speak in detail, for we have seen similar ones in our own time. The *Amity*, which, after fighting two Spanish ships for five hours, compelled them

both to surrender, and the *Richard*, a twenty-ton pinnace with a crew of fourteen, which captured a much larger Portuguese ship, after calmly ordering her crew to abandon her, have their worthy descendants in the *Clan M'Tavish*, which with her one gun engaged the heavily armed *Moewe*, and the *Wandle*, which emerged victorious from half an hour's combat with a submarine.

In the days of Elizabeth, it must be confessed, merchantships could not claim to be armed merely for defensive purposes. They were certainly supposed not to encroach on the preserves of a friendly nation; but a wide discretion was allowed them, and if the Queen was on terms of peace with the rulers of France or Holland, it did not follow that her subjects at the other end of the world would find no cause of friction with natives of those countries. Indeed, the attitude of the Elizabethan seamen towards all foreign nations seems to have been very like the traditional one attributed to the British workman: "There's a foreigner; 'eave 'arf a brick at 'im." When they saw a sail on the horizon, they gave chase to it, without waiting to consider to what nationality it belonged; and if they overtook it, they could generally find some excuse for a fight. They recognised different degrees of hostility, however; they would combine with any Christian nation against Turks or other Mohammedans, and we hear of temporary alliances with the

French and Dutch against the common enemy, Spain. The friendship with the Dutch, however, waned in the seventeenth century with the development of the East Indian trade, in which they were our most serious rivals. Purchas continually finds himself obliged to "mollify" the language of the traders whose reports he quotes, and to explain that the crimes alleged against these Dutchmen in the East must not be attributed to the whole nation. The cause of most of the friction was the system by which the various monarchs and governments gave their subjects exclusive rights in certain territories; each, therefore, had some grounds for looking on the rest as interlopers, and the English seamen considered it a personal insult to the Queen if foreigners did not regard her with the same respect and loyalty as they did themselves. As William Hawkins, in the next reign, said to a Portuguese captain: "The King of England's license is as good as the King of Spain's, and he that saith the contrary is a traytor and a villaine."

This aggressiveness, it may be hoped, we have by now outgrown, but in some respects our relations with other countries have much in common with the Elizabethans'. The war has done for us what the sixteenth-century discoveries did for the Englishmen of that day: it has helped to break down our insular aloofness, and brought us into closer contact with other nations. Men who

before had never left their own country, have now lived for months, or years, abroad; even those of us who have stayed at home have heard and read more about foreign countries than we had done in the rest of our lifetime. It was the same in the sixteenth century. There is hardly a part of the known world into which the travellers quoted by Hakluyt and Purchas had not penetrated, and they did not confine themselves to describing their own adventures, but conscientiously recorded all they could learn of the government, religion, language, and customs of each country they visited. They fought with the Turks in the Mediterranean, with the Spaniards in the Atlantic and Pacific, with the Portuguese and Dutch in the Far East; they mixed with the natives of North and South America, Barbary, Java, and Greenland; they were received in Tartary by the Khan, in India by the Great Mogul, and in Russia by Ivan the Terrible and his successors. The description of Russia, which was less known in England at that time than some more distant lands, is especially interesting to us now. It was in 1553 that Richard Chancellor, attempting to find the North-east Passage to Cathay, landed in the north of Russia; the Muscovy Company was formed soon afterwards; the friendliest of messages were exchanged between the monarchs of the two countries, and commercial intercourse between them rapidly developed. Ivan, belying his

reputation, received the English ambassadors and traders with the utmost cordiality; and Purchas, many years later, attempting to give an impartial survey of the Tsar's character, found that the merchants, to whom he applied for information, could not be induced to say anything unfavourable of one whom they regarded as their benefactor. On the country and the people they passed a less favourable verdict. After the fashion of Elizabethan travellers in foreign lands, they found the inhabitants "barbarians," many of their customs "odious," and their buildings and monuments inferior to those in England. Even they were obliged, however, to praise the wonderful hospitality of the Russians, and had nothing to complain of in their reception or treatment at their hands. Chancellor's comment on the Russian army is noteworthy: "They be such men for hard living as are not under the Sunne; for no cold will hurt them. Now what might bee made of these men if they were trayned and broken to order and knowledge of Civill Warres; if this Prince had within his countries such men as could make them to understand the things aforesaid, I doe beleieve that two of the best or greatest Princes in Christendome were not well able to match with him, considering the greatnesse of his power and the hardnesse of his people."

Besides bringing us into contact with other nations, the

war has had the effect of making us recognise, more than ever before, the value and importance of our Empire. It was in the Elizabethan period that the foundations of Imperial power were laid, by men who, with a larger vision than the mere seekers after gold, could "image the whole" of the great organisation which we now see in being, though it was left to their successors to realise their ideal and bring their work to its full consummation.

In 1600 a Charter was granted to certain "Merchants of London trading into the East Indies," giving them licence to trade in all countries between the Cape of Good Hope and the Magellan Straits, except those already in possession of a Christian and friendly power. This first charter was only for fifteen years, and contemplated no more than the sending of twelve ships a year to the East; in India the Portuguese were already in possession, and every attempt by the English to acquire influence among the natives was thwarted by their intrigues. Thus modestly began the long and romantic history of the merchant adventurers who ruled India for over two hundred years, ousting in turn the Portuguese, Dutch, and French, making their own laws, keeping a standing army, setting up and dethroning kings, and administering hundreds of square miles of territory, till in 1858 they handed over to the Crown the greatest and richest of its possessions.

The beginnings of the American colonies were even less auspicious. Newfoundland had been discovered by Sebastian Cabot and used for many years as a fishing station before Sir Humphrey Gilbert, in 1583, took formal possession of the country in the Queen's name. Storms and other misfortunes prevented him from carrying out his plan of settling a colony there on that occasion, and after the loss of his ship with all hands on the homeward voyage, the scheme was dropped until 1610, when about thirty-five colonists settled there. The Virginian enterprise was begun on a slightly larger scale, but there, too, the ideas of the early colonists were inadequate enough. It was in 1584 that Raleigh obtained the Queen's patent to plant the colony, and in the following year Sir Richard Grenville founded it with about a hundred settlers. Returning in 1586, he was surprised to find no sign of his colony, and after searching for it in vain, left fifteen of his companions to "hold possession of the Countrie"! The casual nature of the early experiments in colonisation is well illustrated by this incident. It appeared that the original settlers, having been attacked by natives, had been taken off by Drake, who had called there on his way back from the "sacke of divers Spanish townes." It was not until the seventeenth century that organised attempts seem to have been made to send out regular supplies of men and provisions, and even then the

difficulties of the colonists were not over. In continual danger from savages, wild beasts, and pirates, weakened by jealousy and discontent among themselves, they might well say, in the words of an anonymous letter-writer, that they went out in the morning not knowing whether they would ever return, and worked with a hoe in one hand and a sword or a gun in the other.

In their treatment of the natives among whom they settled or traded, the Elizabethans, if we allow for the different standard of humanity prevailing in those days, began the policy of mingled kindness and firmness on which we have always prided ourselves, and of which we see the result to-day. The few instances mentioned of what would now seem cruelty cannot justly be considered examples of the tyranny of white men over black, in days when similar treatment was meted out by white men to each other in civilised and Christian countries. On the whole, there seems to have been a clear recognition of the fact that it was necessary to gain the respect and confidence of the natives; and we find one writer strongly condemning certain "wretched men" who had sold some of the Indians into slavery, and thus destroyed the good impression which other Englishmen had laboured to create. The mean between cruelty and weakness was not easy to find, but the behaviour of Captain John Smith, one of the early Virginian settlers, comes very near the ideal, and gives an

example of the firmness, indifference to danger, and almost hypnotic strength of will with which white men in uncivilised countries need to be signally equipped. Facing a crowd of seven hundred armed savages on one occasion, with only sixteen men to support him, he thus addressed them: "If I be the marke that you aime at, here I stand, shoot he that dare. You promised to fraught my ship ere you departed, and so you shall, or I meane to load her with your dead carkasses; yet if as friends you will come and trade, I once more promise not to trouble you, except you give mee the first occasion." "Upon this," we are told, "away went their bowes and arrowes, and men, women, and children brought in their commodities." His methods with idlers among his own company were no less admirable. "I protest by the God that made me, every one that gathereth not every day as much as I doe, the next day shall be set beyond the River, and for ever be banished from the Fort, and live there or starve." Amid all these difficulties he was hampered, as many colonial governors have been since, by the knowledge that his disciplinary measures would be represented as harshness by sentimental theorists in England who knew nothing of the conditions. "I could wish those here," he says bitterly, "that make these seeme Saints, and me an Oppressor."

It is a far cry from these infant settlements of the sixteenth century to our Overseas

Dominions of the present day; but then, as now, there was a spirit abroad which made for colonial expansion: men were no longer content with a narrow, parochial outlook, but had learnt, like Raleigh and Gilbert, to "think Imperially," and, like Captain John Smith, to be ready to undertake the hardship and danger inseparable from the task of building up an Empire.

The extracts already quoted will give some idea of the style in which these records are written. Purchas was strongly affected by the prevailing fashion of Euphuism, and Hakluyt, on the few occasions when he writes in his own person, is not entirely free from it, but the voyagers themselves tell of their exploits as they performed them—vigorously, simply, and straightforwardly. When they are angry or dissatisfied, they do not mince words: rival traders or mutinous seamen are "hell-hounds" and "base villaines"; stormy weather is "outrageous"; savage customs "beastlie" or "devillish." But the thrill of joyful expectancy in the following passage (written by a sailor whose ship had been becalmed within sight of the enemy) can still be felt after three hundred years: "But about one of the clocke, the Lord sent us a pretty gale, our Fleet weighed and put all things in order for to fight"; and this, from the account of another sea-fight, has an eloquence which all the elaborate phrases of the Euphuists could not achieve: "Then stood up

one Grove the master, being a comely man, with his sword and target, holding them up in defiance against his enemies. So likewise stood up the master's mate, boatswaine, purser, and every man well appointed. Nowe likewise sounded up the drums, trumpets and flutes, which would have encouraged any man, had he never so little heart or courage in him."

It is thus that such exploits should be told, and only by the same methods can we hope for an adequate record of contemporary achievements. The force and vitality which have made these sixteenth-century narratives live for us to-day are more likely to be found in the unedited letters of the average soldier and

sailor than in official despatches written for publication, or even in the pen-pictures of eloquent war-correspondents. We do not, like the Elizabethans, live in an age of great literature, but, like them, we live in an age of great deeds; and we can but hope that, when the war is over and the Censor removes his ban, some "industrious Hakluyt" may collect from the men who have fought and suffered their own accounts of their experiences, thus giving them the opportunity both

"To do worthy the writing, and to
write
Worthy the reading, and the world's
delight."

C. M. BOWEN.

“FALLEN ANGELS.”

VI. “NIGHT OPS.”

MANY weary months ago the cherubim staged a revue to cheer up the dejected hearts of the Angels, which from “hope deferred” with regard to speedy commissions were more than uncommon sick. Among the numerous turns was one wherein Gamaliel, disguised as a recruit Angel, flapped heavily about the boards, declaiming in a fruity tenor a song, of which the refrain was somewhat as follows:—

“On Monday you go out with a shovel,
On Tuesday you make your soft feet
hard,
On Wednesday you’re out, just learning
to shout,
On Thursday you’re on guard,
On Friday you do some little night
ops.,
On Saturday you’ll just be coming to,
On Sunday there’s collection,
Likewise sermon and inspection,
Till we make a dinky sub. of each of
you.”

It being a Friday, Lewis considered that it would be in harmony with this time-honoured refrain, now the anthem of the corps, to do “some little night ops.”; so he arranged to spend the night in the trenches. The weather being cloudy and the ground not more than six inches deep in mud, the occasion seemed exceedingly auspicious.

Apparently all the other companies seemed smitten with the same idea at the same moment, with the result that he received no less than four offers from other companies to

attack him during the night. Thinking the odds too great, he bought off one of them, combined with a second to hold an adjacent lot of trenches, and took up the gauntlet, hurled down thus defiantly by A and C led by the doughty Brae.

So in the fading light of a summer evening, observe on the Common sinuous columns of infantry moving into position. In the cadet trenches, No. 2 Cadet Company were busy making preparations to give the enemy a warm reception, while on their right D Company were similarly engaged. Behind them in an old quarry pit, a local reserve of two strong platoons, under the command of Lieut. Brown, were assembling with the idea of counter-attacking later in the evening, if the foe should succeed in penetrating into the fastnesses of the front line.

In the bracken, in front of the position, Phayle and Rupy of Bavaria were superintending a platoon, hard at work putting up trip-wires and booby traps. These latter are all sorts of weird and wonderful contraptions, based on the general principle of the door and wet sponge beloved of the average schoolboy when scoring off crusty bachelor uncles. The practical joke element is a great feature of war, and the idea of a portly Hun tripping

over a rabbit snare and thereby upsetting a load of stones on to a rusty biscuit tin, while he collapses helplessly into a pile of prickly branches and rusty nails, is distinctly humorous. If this can be combined with some ingenious device whereby his involuntary collapse ignites some form of bonfire, so that you can direct a machine-gun into the softly swearing heap, the height of amusement is indeed reached.

Phayle, when busy at this sort of game, reminds you of a Heath Robinson picture. In fact the company, after inspecting one of his sample booby traps, wherein by an arrangement of weights and pulleys and odds and ends of string the wandering Hun scout would unawares set off an extempore alarm clock, fire a rifle aimed in his own direction, release a heavy stone on his own head, ring an electric bell in the defending company commander's dug-out and ignite a large flare all at one and the same moment, began to believe that he really *is* Heath Robinson in disguise.

The cadets take kindly to this part of the curriculum. To begin with, the manual labour is small and the entertainment afforded by the sight of the "Adjer" taking a toss over your wire amply repays any small exertion expended in its construction.

In view of the large numbers of the attacking force, Phayle had constructed a perfect network of these contraptions, so many indeed that he had rather forgotten where they all were.

Consequently, when a distinguished party of spectators, billet-ladies and the like, arrived, and he hurried across to point out the best place to see the show from, he caught his foot in an unseen snare and went about six yards on his nose, to the huge joy of the on-looking cadets.

While he was busy constructing these "alarms," as the book describes them, Lewis was holding forth to half a dozen seraphim on the details of the programme. Rumours that this was to be a real "star" performance having got abroad at mess, practically all the seraphim and various of the cherubim also had turned out. There were the leaders of A and C Companies, the padre, Tweedledum, Ryter, the second in command of No. 4 Cadet Company, more familiarly known as "Angelina," and hosts of others.

Night ops., or, as one's landlady in billets more accurately describes them, "night hops," are sad and painful operations as a rule, and the company commanders generally adopt if possible what we may describe as a Kaiserlich attitude. That is to say, they take up a strategical position well in rear and shoo their myrmidons forward towards the barbed wire with, "Go on, my brave lads, I can spare another million of you yet," or words to that effect.

Brae, the leader of A Company, is out to-night for the first time for a long while. The Fallen Angels used to have a depot in town where, by means of limed twigs and other

feather-snaring devices, they used to entrap fluttering Angels. Brae was selected for the command of this important post and filled it excellently. He used to go up to town by the milk train on Monday morning, fairly cheery, to return late on Friday night in a state of open mutiny. He invariably on these occasions made straight for the orderly-room in search of Tweedledum or Tweedledee, or both. Clanking his spurs together, he would draw a long breath and then start his invariable week-end speech.

"Look here, I've had enough of this. I'm fed up. I've got 2793 men at the depot and only one subaltern, and he's seconded. If you can't give me another I'll . . . I'll . . ."

"Oh, go away and have a drink, old boy," Tweedledum would say soothingly. "What you want is a night's rest. You'll be much better in the morning. What do you want a subaltern for? You wouldn't know what to do with him if you got one. You'd wrap him up in tinfoil for fear you lost him. Besides, you wouldn't have a grouse then, and what's having a subaltern compared to having a grouse. Think of getting up in the morning with no little grouse to cherish all day. Think of not being able to go to the golf club and tell every one that you've got 3942 men and no subaltern. Your life would be a perfect misery to you. Go away and be good."

Brae would depart, calling down fire and brimstone on the heads of the orderly-room staff as he shook the dust

of the place off his feet. This performance was repeated each week at 10.45 P.M. every Friday evening for months, until, owing to the Military Service Act, there was no more recruiting to be done, and Brae eventually closed down the depot and came back to Loamington to lead A Company. Now he has 271 men, 3 subalterns, and no grouse.

He is a marvellously cheerful person, except when he gets on the subaltern question. He always appears to have a smile handy, and a jovial twinkle in his eye.

Redvers, the *pro tem.* director of the destinies of C Company, is a small slim person, tanned to practically the same colour as his uniform. He has just achieved his third star, but has still the same irrepressible manner that stamped him as a subaltern. He is of that strange type that makes jokes even at breakfast-time, and appears never to be at a loss for something to say.

The party were watching Phayle's Heath Robinson efforts and discussing night ops., which are a distinct feature of the life of the Fallen Angels. Listen to Redvers:—

"I do loathe night ops. As far as I can make out, there are roughly two kinds of night ops.—

(a) Those in which you know where you are—viz., ten miles from the nearest pub.;

(b) Those in which you don't know where you are.

"Apparently the secret of successful night shows is to take a map, draw a line on it in any direction, read off the bearing, multiply it by 17, add $31\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$, take away the number you first thought of, divide the result by $5\frac{2}{3}$, add the compass variation, and publish the result as the true bearing. Then march each company five miles to different points, and direct them to march on the above bearing, and go on marching till they meet, or until to-morrow morning. Provide all the officers with an orilux lamp and the rank and file with a white hat-band; tell each company that some other company is the directing one; put trip-wires on the roads, start them off, and then go home to bed. If possible, arrange for them to start on opposite sides of the canal at a point where there is no bridge. If you can arrange for all the companies to fall into it, you may wear red tabs for the rest of your life. If, however, any two companies effect a meeting before 3 A.M., stop their leave for a fortnight. It's a *topping* game."

"Cheer up, Redvers!" said Lewis. "This is a gentlemanly picnic to-night. Observe your myrmidons advancing. Think! You might be leading them instead of sitting here."

Behind the group a muffled beat of footsteps broke on the night air, and a long column swung past in the gathering gloom; Brae's and Redvers' commandos moving out to take up their positions for

the attack. After they had passed, No. 2 Cadet Company and No. 4 arrived to occupy the trenches. There was little to show as they worked their way up the communication trenches towards the firing line. They had occupied these trenches many times before, and it had become a matter of routine so that one heard but little noise, just here and there the voices of the section commanders telling off the men for each fire bay, and the occasional rattle of accoutrements, and the muffled curse as a laden man tripped in the trench, or collapsed into a hole full of muddy water, for the Angels' trenches are nothing if not realistic.

At the tail of the line a couple of men stumbled along with a large box of high art fireworks, produced by Phayle, who makes a speciality of choosing the most explosive and odoriferous productions of the pyrotechnic art. On this occasion he had invested in a collection of "drain testers," with which he proposed to carry out a gas attack in the early dawn.

After the defenders had settled down there was quiet for a space, until an unholy crash of stones and metal, and the crack of a rifle someway down the line, announced that something was afoot. Presently followed another shot, and then several more, and then "Who-o-o-osh-sh!" a Verey pistol-light soared heavenwards, and dropping slowly spread its light over the scene, converting the vel-

vety darkness into white staring light, and disclosing two moving figures close beyond the wire in "No Man's Land." As the unwelcome radiance burst out one of them stiffened into immobility, and the other hurled himself flat on the ground in the uncanny light that showed up every strand of wire and twig and leaf, as sharp and bright as on a frosty moonlit night, while the intense black shadows seemed to the watchers' eyes pregnant with lurking enemy. A ragged splutter of fire ran down the line as the dropping flare fell earthward.

"D—— those silly asses," muttered Second-Lieutenant Head, as, cramped behind a gorse-bush with a pocket full of "thunderbangs," he waited for the light to die away. "Just like 'em to run into a trip-wire and upset those bricks. I told 'em to watch for booby traps, and now they've queered the pitch. Now I shall have to waste a lot of time waiting till the wind up dies down. D—— . . ."

Head is our battalion "anarchist," and is in his element to-night, and, in fact, on all night ops. He is a peaceful-looking, colourless person, most mild in appearance, and you would never, in your wildest flights of fancy, connect him with the Suicide Club. But fill his pockets with bombs, and direct him to crawl forth in the mud and slush, and prickles and nettles, and he will be as much in his element as any marauding panther.

On this occasion his aim was the destruction of a listening-post he knew to have been pushed out from the front line. In order the better to keep a jealous watch on the other side, both parties in trench warfare have contracted a prying habit of digging out small blind-alleys in front of their trenches, in which they place a couple of men, who, knee-deep in mud, spend sleepless hours watching for possible hostile movements.

During our night ops, life in "No Man's Land" is rather like the second act of a silly-season melodrama. In the listening-post the hero, Cadet Greenway, is meditating how he will save the beleaguered garrison by doing-in a platoon or so of the foe when they endeavour to cut the wire-curtain in front. "Off left" the villain, Head, is blowing gently on a glowing bit of tinder hidden in his coat, and fingering a bomb, as he murmurs sardonically, "Aha! A time will come." In the centre of the stage a comic interlude is going on, where the comedian group, under the leadership of Cadet Ball, are struggling with a coil of barbed wire, endeavouring to erect a hasty wire entanglement; while beyond them, some thirty yards away, a similar group of the opposition firm, under the leadership of Private M'Nab, *alias* Hans Heinrich von Puffenblow, are wrestling with a refractory knife-rest. "Off right" observe the wicked Baron, in the shape of Phayle, with a few pounds of gun-

powder and a safety-fuse, endeavouring to add to the gaiety of nations by laying a mine in the front-line trench.

At intervals Verey pistol-flares are moaning their sorrows to the skies, and under a bush in the foreground Cadet Chilton is stalking the villain. By way of orchestra, both sides are keeping up a desultory fire, to the intense annoyance of their respective friends in front.

Head, taking advantage of an extra long spell of darkness, has wormed his way, regardless of thistles and nettles, unobserved, within fifteen yards of the listening-post, and hurled a couple of thunderbangs on the head of the hero. This produces retaliation in the shape of another flare and a burst of fire all down the line; while Cadet Robinson, observing Chilton's snake-like form in the bushes, hurls a bomb at it, imagining him to be some lurking foe.

Cadet Ball and Hans Heinrich, crouching down among their coils of wire, become mutually aware of each other's presence, and each conceives at the same moment the noble idea of rushing the other's party, and are only prevented from carrying the project into effect by both lots coming on one of Phayle's booby traps and collapsing, a mingled heap of struggling forms and smothered expletives, into a half-dug sap.

The flare, moreover, disclosed on the parapet of the Hun trench a long line of crouching forms, the leading wave of the long-threatened attack. The

hitherto desultory fire quickens into the long-drawn rattle that marks real business.

In the blacker darkness that follows the eclipse of the flare, the watchers along the parapet gaze wide-eyed into the dark, trying to make out how far the attackers have reached, but in view of the thick grass and patches of fern it is almost impossible to see anything beyond the gaunt posts of the wire in front. Strained nerves find relief in the comfort of the rifle bolt, and the velvet blackness of the night is stabbed with a hundred tongues of flame. Cadet Meadows, bidding his section "shoot like hell," feels a thrill run down his spine as another flare, soaring aloft, shows the dense line of the attack now close up to the wire. "Almost the real thing," murmurs "Angelina" from his post of vantage. "Phayle ought to have been a stage manager."

A blinding flash, followed by a dull report, marks where Head is again busy round the listening-post, and almost with the echo come three or four more reports, showing that Cadet Robinson has decided to take the offensive himself and bomb out the bombers.

Simultaneously with the blinding flame a dark inchoate mass surges forward through the cut wires, and the full weight of A and C Coys. drives over the parapet into the first-line trench. The defenders give way, and a mere scattered remnant fall back down the communication trenches, halting now and then

to hurl back bombs at the victorious foe.

These latter, however, are out for blood to-night, and not content with the fire trench push onward to the support line, but before they have half-reached it another flare bursts out, showing, bearing down on them, a hastily organised counter-attack under Brown.

As the flare dies out the two forces meet and the darkness is rent again with stab upon stab of red flame and made horrible by yells and screams, as No. 1 platoon, driving all before it, pushes the attackers back, and both lots surge off into the night, a swearing, panting mob. Here and there the vivid flashes of the "bombs" light up little patches of ground, and now and again the dead white light of the flares show the ebb and flow of the fight, till at last the chief stage manager blows the "Stand Fast," and the company commanders proceed to disentangle the mingled fragments of their commands.

"Not so unlike the real article," says Phayle as he lights a cigarette. "Considering it's all make-believe, it's not half a bad show. I almost thought I was 'out there' again."

"Out There" is what we all dream of, of course. Seraphim, hoping against hope, Cherubim, longing to get back, and Minor Angels all—more especially since "The Push" has started and the lengthening casualty rolls bring home the nearness of it all. To-day we

had our first casualty in the company, and he only left us a matter of six weeks back. Barely ten days "out there," and now he is "out" altogether.

True, it is only mimic war in Loamington, but it makes us think, and as No. 1 platoon, whose final exam. comes off next week, sit easy in the warm dark waiting for the real night's work to begin, for this is only the prelude to a full night in the trenches, they can't help thinking of the time when they too will be "out there," and wonder if they will even have as long a run for their money as he had.

Not that it really matters how long we last, because we don't worry very much about glory any more, for the cherubim have rubbed it into us sufficiently that nothing in the world counts at all except to do your day's work fully, cheerfully, and cleanly finished, and the finest finish of all is the little line in the Roll of Honour—"Killed in Action." We think of the men we know with D.S.O.'s, Military Crosses, red tabs and all, but not one of their names has the wondrous glamour that haloes the name of the dead out there.

"Longshanks is very quiet to-day," says Phayle.

"Yes," replies Lewis, "he had a wire this afternoon to say his brother's been killed. A good lad, Longshanks, and I think he'll get through next week. Going to his brother's regiment. I expect they'll be glad to get him in his brother's place. Wonder why it is that all the best fellows get killed

off? The pick of our regiments are dead, and here are we. War's a mad game at best." Then murmured to himself—

"The day's work ceased for them
so soon
And we are left to strive

Still longer to complete the task
They eased for us, alive.'

That's what we're left for, I suppose, just to carry on as best we can."

He blows his whistle: "Fall in No. 2. Carry on."

VII. "BIVOUACS."

"What's this horrid yarn concerning the Cadet Battalion going into bivouac?" queried Shipman of No. 4 Cadet Company, as he seated himself on the corner of the office table in the orderly-room of No. 2.

"Heaven alone knows," said Phayle. "My skipper did say something about it yesterday; but he wasn't very clear, and as at the moment he was wrestling with the mess accounts his remark was more than usually incoherent. However, he's coming up shortly, and I expect he can tell you. I know he's seen the C.O. this morning."

Shipman is a longish, thin captain of British infantry. As his ideas on the training of cadets run somewhat on the same lines as those of the Commander of No. 2, they generally make a point of working more or less together. His genial, pleasant manner conceals a great deal of determination, although strangers might be misled by his rather slow, soft drawl into thinking him rather lacking in resolution. Despite the fact that he hails from Sussex, he has somewhere or other picked up a trick of drawling out "Sure thing" in a most Canadian way. Phayle

had hardly concluded his remarks when there entered on the scene Lewis, the skipper of No. 2.

"Salaam, Captain Sahib," quoth Shipman, who on the strength of a certain number of years' soldiering in India occasionally garnishes his speech with a tag or two of Hindustani when talking to Lewis, who, as before stated, belongs to a Native regiment.

"Salaam, Shipman Ji," replied Lewis; "just got details of this terrible scheme of boovacking that the C.O.'s got up his sleeve. Going to take us all out to Pinehill Park for three days, rifle bivouacs, food cooked in mess-tins, day outposts, night outposts, alarms, excursions, feet inspections, and all the usual discomforts that accompany glorious war. Says it will be a good chance for the cadets to learn to look after a platoon in the field."

"When are we goin' out?" queried Shipman.

"Tuesday next as ever is, unless it starts raining. As the glass is dropping fast there's every chance of its starting and continuing; not that that really matters, because I never knew a bivouac yet where it didn't start to rain as soon as the

troops got into camp. However, it'll make it more realistic, and it can't make it very much more uncomfortable."

"Sure," ejaculated Shipman. His speech is generally rather monosyllabic.

"What arrangements for messing, sir?" asked Gamaliel.

"Every Company will make its own, and the cadets themselves to cook the midday meal. You'd better take 'bully' for that, Gamaliel; that'll save 'em having to eat raw meat, for I'm dead certain none of them ever cooked anything in their lives. They'll have something to tell their mothers and sisters this weekend, I'm thinking. As regards officers, we'll have the same food as the cadets. Shall we mess with you, Shipman?"

"Right-oh! We'll sink or swim together. What about tools?"

"C.O. says we aren't going to do much digging this journey — it's all going to be field warfare; we do digging enough in here. Any one who breathes the word 'trench' will be publicly executed. So we are just going to take out half a dozen picks and shovels for each company. However, we shall want all the cutting tools we've got, 'cos the noble lord who owns the place says we may use all the fallen timber that we can find, so long as we don't try and emulate George Washington with his little axe and cut down the baronial oak-trees. See to the tools, will you, Phayle?"

"What about drinks?" inquired the practical and thirsty Gamaliel. "Shall I bring some of the new mess port I got down last week? We might form a tasting committee. Anyway, it'll serve to stop gaps when the cadets have burnt the bully beyond eating."

"Yes, bring along the port by all means; and also lots of beer."

"Well, now for the actual programme."

Lewis and Shipman settled down to study the schedule of work proposed for the camp, the others wandered off to break the sad news to their respective platoons. As they went out of the door Lewis shouted after Phayle—

"Don't forget to show 'em how to make a bivouac, because they'll have to make *ours* as well as their own." . . .

About midday on the Tuesday after the discussion just recorded, any one passing by "Netherfield"—the palatial residence occupied by the greater part of No. 2 Cadet Company—might have observed unwonted signs of an approaching exodus. In the middle of the drive were piled up bundles of blankets; while in the tent on the tennis-lawn was to be observed the Sergeant-Major, whom we have met before disguised as Rupy of Bavaria, dishing out bundles of blank ammunition. In the Entrance Hall a small knot of cadets were listening to Corporal Rose holding forth

to his section on what they should put in their packs. "Now then, you fellows, please listen here a moment while I tell you what each man's got to take with him." Rose is a dear, delightful, charming man, an artist by profession, and, like every one else in the country, a soldier for the moment. But at present he is rather a thorn in the side of his instructors, owing to the excessive politeness which always impels him to prefix to his commands "Would you mind," or "Now then, you fellows, please." On being reproached with this by Lewis, he replied, "Well, you see, sir, it's very hard to adopt a drill-sergeant manner with a lot of one's fellow-cadets who probably know more than one does oneself." "Never mind, Rose," said Lewis; "remember that what in the sergeant's mouth becomes rank blasphemy is in the captain's mouth but gentle choler. Try and think you are a captain." When he isn't painting portraits he spends his time in golf, and possesses the enviable distinction of a plus 2 handicap. If one didn't know it, one might surmise the fact by merely listening to him instructing a class in musketry. His "detail" for the firing position is somewhat as follows:—"On the command 'standing, load' please turn half right, carrying the left foot forward, so as to get a good stance. The great thing is to keep the eyes on the ball, as you were, I mean the mark, &c., &c."

On the present occasion,

instead of expounding a medley of musketry and the royal and ancient game, he was reading out a list compiled by Phayle of the articles that each cadet should carry with him in his pack. "Greatcoat, spare shirt, spare socks, shaving tackle, towel, soap, mess-tin, knife, fork, and spoon, and any other small things you might find useful in camp. On top of the pack a rolled blanket and a waterproof sheet, the gas helmet, of course, in the haversack as usual. Also, every man will carry eight yards of cord—no, Gabbler, *not* to hang yourself with—to make a bivouac with." One could watch the cadets' faces growing longer and their shoulders sinking lower as he proceeded with the list. "My sacred Aunt," said Robinson, "my papers are in for a light infantry push. What does 'heavy infantry' carry?"

In the kitchen, Gamaliel, assisted by the Quartermaster-Sergeant, was checking large boxes of bully-beef, piles of cooking utensils, sacks of potatoes and various other necessities of life. Small parties of cadets were running hither and thither, collecting the various impedimenta—picks, shovels, axes, saws, and the like which accompany a battalion in the field. The local gas company had seized the auspicious occasion to search for the gas main, which they appeared to have mislaid, with the result that the drive looked very much like the Ypres salient after a heavy bombardment. The flow of

sulphurous expletives from an excavation at the entrance to the drive showed where Lewis and his new bicycle had found the gas main. In order to relieve his feelings at somebody else's expense, he hastily proceeded to shout "Gas" loudly.

In the early stages of the war, the Company commander's task of teaching his men to take cover consisted merely in showing them how to adopt recumbent or other attitudes calculated to protect them from the enemy's missiles. Nowadays, thanks to Brer Hun, this task is still further complicated by having to show them how to avoid being asphyxiated. Every man carries on his person at all times what is known as a smoke-helmet—to be precise, he carries two of them. These are weird bags of a woollen fabric, impregnated with various nauseous chemicals, the action of which is antagonistic to the various gases employed by the little Hun. They are not, alas, allowed to be used at lecture time.

The helmets are furnished with two large round eye-pieces of glass and a tube valve through which to exhale. As the warning of a gas attack is very brief, all ranks have to be practised in putting on the helmet in the shortest possible time.

The word "Gas," shrieked out by Lewis, produced feverish activity among the cadets, as they tore open their haversacks and proceeded to insert their heads into the smoke-helmets. In next to no time

the company had fallen - in, looking for all the world like a dress rehearsal of frogs at a Christmas pantomime. The only sound to be heard was the stertorous breathing of Cadet Ball, whose figure, more or less, coincided with his name. The addition of the frog-like headgear, adjusted so that one eye-piece covered his right ear and the other the nape of his neck, the whole crowned by a service cap about two sizes too small, reduced Phayle to absolute hysterics, and it was some moments before he could recover sufficient gravity to explain to Ball the futility of putting on a helmet so that you couldn't see out of it. After a few moments spent in breathing exercises through the tube, whose valves here and there squeaked or croaked, thereby increasing the resemblance to a frog carnival, Lewis gave the signal to remove the helmets, and the gasping cadets emerged from them looking in imminent danger of apoplexy. Having thus relieved his feelings, he dismissed them to continue their preparations for the march.

The transport having been duly started off, the company set out. About a mile along the road they met No. 4 Cadet Company at the rendezvous, and halted to await the arrival of the rest of the battalion, which could be seen in the distance moving up from its billets.

After an uneventful march they arrived at Pinehill Park, where they proceeded to bivouac. Previous to the war,

soi-disant "military" painters had familiarised the public with the soldier's life in bivouac, as they fondly imagined it to be. The type of picture generally produced was line upon line of recumbent soldiers, wrapped in their martial cloaks, sleeping peacefully in the fitful glare of a row of camp-fires. On one side of the picture was always an array of piled arms, over which a stern-faced sentry mounted guard. In the foreground, a theatrical-looking General, accompanied by an orderly with a lantern, gazed intently towards a similar row of fires marking the enemy's position. A pair of furled colours generally occupied the centre of the line of rifles, while a cherubic-looking drummer-boy, aged nine, slept hard by, dreaming of mother. This was the artist's idea of a bivouac.

To come down to reality: the actual bivouac generally consists of a row of small shelters constructed by lacing together a couple of blankets, and supporting them, wigwam fashion, on a rope held up by a couple of sticks or occasionally rifles. This was the type of bivouac that the cadet battalion constructed. In view of the prevalence of hostile aircraft, fires and orderly array are now at a discount; the better to conceal ourselves from prying, hostile eyes, we each place our little shelter where it may best be screened, more particularly from observation from above. Further, in order that his weapon may be handy in case of alarm, we no longer pile arms, but each man

sleeps with his rifle by his side. Generals and staff officers do not wander about with lanterns gazing at the enemy's line, but establish themselves in more prosaic but more comfortable quarters in the "Pig and Whistle" at the cross-roads farther back, or in some other similar locality which holds out the prospect of shelter from the elements and a comfortable room to work in. For no man can be expected to think coherently when he is squatting in 6 inches of mud, with the rain trickling down the back of his neck.

This was the first time that the cadets had to shift for themselves in this way, and the bivouac-shelters they ran up were of weird and wonderful types. They had been advised to bring packing-needles and thread with which to stitch their blankets together. One brainy youth, however, had filled his haversack full of clothes-pegs, presumably pinched from his billet-lady's backyard, and with these he proceeded to erect a blanket-shelter of Albert Hall dimensions. Some of them had also brought small sticks to hold up the blankets, but others, with less forethought, were compelled to go and gather them in the woods around.

In order that the cadets themselves should have practice in command, as usual a company commander, platoon commanders, and N.C.O.'s were appointed. Longshanks was Company Commander for the day. He is coming on a good deal, and has learned quite a

lot about the art of command. This was borne home on Lewis when he called up Longshanks and told him to detail working parties in the company. Longshanks saluted smartly, turned about and called for his temporary Sergeant-Major, Cadet Ball, who arrived at the double.

"Sergeant-Major, the company has to find a working-party to clear the ground in front; carry on, please." Thus is the spirit of command born.

Having seen the company installed in their bivvies and dinner served out, Lewis and Phayle wandered over in the direction of No. 4, with whose officers they were sharing a mess. They found the officers of that company seated around the mess-table discussing the topic of universal interest whenever the cherubim meet—namely, at what exact time and exact point the Push of Pushes is going to commence. It is an extraordinary thing that, whenever this subject is discussed, everybody has reliable information from "a fellow who came over from the front last week, who heard it from the Divisional Staff, General Headquarters, Joffre's A.D.C., the C.R.A. of the Blank Army, &c., &c., &c."

On this occasion there were eight people partaking in the discussion, and according to them there were eight certain points and eight definite dates when *the* Push would start, while the total area of ground which would be covered by the operations appeared to extend from the sea to Frise.

This does not include the information supplied by the junior subaltern, who had definite information that three British armies would advance on Metz the following week. He was certain it was true, because he'd had it from a cousin of his sister's husband, who'd just met a man in the R.F.C., who knew the Sapper in the photo-litho department who was preparing the maps for the Push.

Eventually some one suggested bed, and the wearied cherubim and seraphim crawled away to their damp bivvies, for the expected rain had arrived during dinner-time, and although it was not actually raining at the moment, everything was pretty wet.

"I wonder if the C.O. is contemplating any tricks to-night," said Phayle, as he stood in the end of his shelter and looked over to the C.O.'s quarters some hundred yards away. "Chayne (the officiating adjutant of the cadet battalion) was so careful to explain that no alarms would take place that I fancied I smelt a rat. Methinks he did protest too much."

"I hope not," replied Lewis, who was unlacing his boots. "I'm for pyjamas anyway. Haven't the staff gone to bed yet?"

"No! there's the C.O. looking over this way, and Chayne is rummaging about in the orderly-room tent, looking for bombs in all probability. (One 'thunderbang' firework, officially described as a 'bomb,'

was the signal for an alarm.) Don't like it a bit, master. There he is coming out again."

Lewis poked his head out and ostentatiously lit a cigarette, and turned on his electric torch. "Perhaps if they see we're still awake they'll give it up and go to bed."

Sure enough Chayne went off shortly to his shelter, and after an interval put out his light.

Lewis and Phayle watched a little longer, and then the former said, "Well, I'm not waiting any longer. Bombs or no bombs, I'm getting into pyjamas and going to bed. A trench coat, like charity, covers many things, and mine's handy if we're called up. Night, night!" A few minutes later saw both attempting to sleep.

Lewis had almost succeeded, when a horrid detonation rent the stillness of the night.

"Blast!" said Phayle as he sat up and reached for his boots. "Wonder if there's time to dress. No, the company's beginning to turn out now, and as they're nuts on getting on parade before the others I'd better risk it." So, slipping on his trench coat, he put on his puttees over his pyjamas, jammed on his cap, and hurried off to the company parade-ground, where he found the cadets already fallen-in, preparing to move to the battalion alarm-post.

Longshanks, having been warned by Phayle of possible eventualities, had bidden the company to sleep, each man with his equipment buttoned under one shoulder-strap, and

one arm in the sling of his rifle, while puttees if taken off were to be put in the coat-pockets. This was the first time that the battalion had been out together, and a spirit of rivalry was abroad.

The first company on the ground was Shipman's, which arrived in the very creditable time of four minutes after the alarm sounding, thereby beating No. 2 by nearly a minute. The other companies followed shortly, the whole battalion assembling within seven minutes, not half bad for a new battalion out for the first time, more especially as the officers took no part, the whole show being run by the cadets.

The C.O. having made one or two flattering remarks about the celerity and silence of the performance, proceeded to damp the glow of enthusiasm kindled in the cadets' breasts by his praise by saying, "And now, gentlemen, we shall do some battalion drill."

Ye gods! Dark, damp midnight in Pinehill Park and battalion drill? Strenuousness with a vengeance.

"What an ass I was to join an O.T.C.," moaned Cadet Ball as he shivered in the raw, black night, a feeling shared by many of the other angels, more particularly the seraphim.

From out of the darkness in front a Voice proceeded to incite the companies to all manners of movements, in line, in fours, in columns, while seraphim and cherubim in hoarse whispers besought, prayed, implored, or cursed errant platoon.

A sulphurous blue cloud on the right showed where Tapny, the skipper of No. 1, was telling his rear platoon what he thought of them. Lewis, shooing his No. 1 platoon into place, caught a few words: "Think you're fit to be officers yet? Why, I wouldn't have you to fill sandbags at the front. I . . . well, I wouldn't have you as sandbags even! For the Lord's sake try and keep in line."

Tapny is one of the most strenuous of the seraphim. He is an ex-sergeant-major who obtained, firstly, his commission, and then an accelerated captaincy for distinguished conduct in the field, and contrives by the picturesque of his remarks to instil the most marvellous discipline into his command. He has, thanks to his early training, the complete sergeant-major's eye, and woe betide the unfortunate cadet who, imagining himself safe from observation in the rear rank of No. 4 platoon, dares to twitch an eyelid or move a muscle when standing to attention. Tapny will spot him even if his back happens to be turned.

At the end of an hour's nightmare of Egyptian darkness and complicated movements, the battalion finds itself on the alarm-post again, and the Voice from the front bids it fall out and go to bed.

"Thank God for a trench coat," says Lewis, as he displays his mauve pyjamas underneath. "Wonder what you'd have done, Jock, if you'd come

out in a kilt instead of trews." This addressed of his new subaltern, a Cameron man recently posted to his company, whose jacket and trews also concealed some fancy pyjamas. "You'd have looked like Schmidt the spy in Highland kit."

"Weel, you see A thocht we might be getting an alarm, so A kept my trews sorrt o' handy."

"Jock" is the show figure of the company when inspecting Generals come round. Lewis makes him get into his kilt; and his military cross, his Highland speech, and his kilt, unusual sight in Loamington, so attract the inspecting officers' attention that by the time they've done talking to him they find it's time to go off to the next company, and quite forget to ask Lewis the stock inspection questions as to what percentage of his men are married, how many children they've got, what school they were at, whether any have false teeth, if they smoke cigarettes before breakfast, and all the other questions that inspecting officers feel it is incumbent to ask.

"Let's go bedward," said Lewis as he finished his drink. "We've got a heavy day to-morrow, or rather to-day, for it's nearly one now."

"Half six, master," shouted Phayle as he emerged from his bivvy, and presently Lewis crawled out of his tent very sleepy and heavy-eyed, and standing up looked round the camp.

Even to his jaundiced eyes the scene was full of charm. The light of the newly risen sun still low in the horizon poured through the beech-trees, gilding everything it touched. The open spaces and shadowy aisles in the green-wood seemed cooler and more inviting than ever, and the clinging dew sparkled on leaf and blade, and the air was full of the rich scent of damp earth and turf, in the limpid freshness of this English summer morning. Beyond the edge of the wood stretched a wide expanse of open meadow, and beyond that stood the great mass of buildings of Pinehill Hall, its white stone standing out against the dark background of the trees, with the crenellated walls apparently topped with gold where the morning sunbeams kissed them.

Slowly walking across the meadow was a stately procession of spotted deer, gazing with big wondering eyes at the unaccustomed sight of a number of strange men moving about the usually deserted woods.

Lewis, who had not seen a morning in the English countryside for several years, thought of the mornings in camp in the dusty Indian plains, or the rocky uplands of Rajputana, the sandy flats beyond Aden, and the heavy tropical dawns in the African bush, where the trees, instead of seeming friendly, appeared to bear down on you and crush you like living, inimical beings, and you woke more weary than the night before.

“Good morning, master,” shouted Gamaliel, where he stood washing at his canvas camp-basin. Gamaliel is one of those strange characters who are quite cheery even in the dawn after a trying comfortless night on the ground in bivouac. “Breakfast’s just coming on.”

Lewis turned to reply and saw the cadets busy round their shelters cleaning their rifles and kits preparatory to the morning inspection. The mess orderlies were moving about with the large iron buckets known as “dixies,” in which the soldier cooks everything he eats or drinks. In front of one row of shelters Lance-Corporal Rose was busy with an iron ladle dividing the contents of a dixie between the mess-tins of his platoon, placed on the ground at his feet, while Longshanks, seated on a tree trunk, was hacking up loaves of bread with his clasp-knife. Lewis wondered what Mrs Rose or Longshanks’ mother would think if they could watch this method of serving breakfast. At any rate, it solves the servant problem pretty effectually.

Then he walked over to the mess-table, where Claude was handing round the bacon.

“Claude” is rather a feature of the *Fallen Angels*, where officers’ servants are very scarce. In person he is of middle height and extreme thinness, with a rather bald head. He is exceedingly deferential (he was a valet to a “personage” for many years) and always knows exactly what you want long before

you do. Since getting into khaki he has become most punctilious as regards saluting and other military etiquette. To clean a pair of boots while standing to attention is a feat of some difficulty, but Claude can achieve it to perfection. How it is done is hard to say, but if one sees him at any time of the day cleaning a pair of boots and an officer happens to come near, two facts are immediately obvious—firstly, that Claude is still cleaning the boots; and secondly, that he is standing at attention. I wonder if he will carry these habits back into civil life after the war.

Breakfast in bivouac is generally a more cheerful function than it is at home. Firstly, there are no morning papers to fortify ourselves behind; and secondly, instead of sleeping in a stuffy room, we have spent the night in the fresh air, so that although our joints may be stiff and every muscle complaining, our heads at least are clear.

"What's the wheeze to-day, master?" queried Gamaliel as he helped himself to marmalade.

"Flank-guard towards Hudnall, followed by the cadets cooking their lunches on Hudnall Common. The last operation is likely to be more difficult than the first, I fancy, although as the country is fairly well wooded there's a more than reasonable prospect of some of them losing themselves."

"Good egg, a flank-guard show," said Phayle. "I've never seen one done practically yet. Most people tell you it's

an advance-guard turned sideways, and leave it at that. And nowadays in France, with Switzerland on the right and the sea on the left, flank-guards are at a discount. We should have a merry morning."

An hour or two later observe the company progressing slowly across country as the flank-guard of a battalion. Flank-guards, rear-guards, outposts, &c., are at heart very much the same things under different names. In this way—

The Brigade Commander, fearing that his command may be surprised at a moment when he is having his afternoon siesta; or perhaps attacked in the dawn, and he be forced to appear in haste unshaven and with hair undyed, directs one of his battalion commanders to take his regiment and interpose it between the distant enemy and the brigade. The aforesaid battalion commander curses under his breath, touches his hat, and does so. Then, determined that come what may *he*, in company with the best part of the battalion, shall at least have his meals in moderate comfort, or if on the march be able to toddle along quietly and drowsily without being sniped, sends for Captain Jones and says, "Jones, take your company and do outpost company (or vanguard or rear party as the case may be)." Jones, inwardly damning the C.O.'s nerves, also touches his hat and removes himself and his company still farther afield. Having got out of sight of the C.O., he halts it and directs

Sec. - Lieut. Boggins to take his platoon some distance farther on, and ensure that the company at large and the captain in particular are not interfered with by the enemy. Boggins does so, and when at a safe distance from the company bids rotund Corporal Whittingham to depart with his section with all speed, and post it in such points of vantage as will ensure the platoon having a quiet day.

Corporal Whittingham thereupon gets out of view, and being of ample figure and no athlete, calls upon Private Wallace to escalate the nearest elevated point, tree or hill or house, and observe the direction of the enemy (or if on manoeuvres, the direction from which the company commander or other inquisitive inspecting officers might appear) until further orders.

The unhappy Wallace, not being able to order anybody to go still farther, settles down to be the eyes and ears of the Brigade Commander three miles away.

"So, naturalists observe, a flea
Has smaller fleas that on him prey;
And these have smaller still to bite 'em;
And so proceed *ad infinitum*."

Evidently privates are the infinite.

When you are halted this game is called outposts, but when you are on the move it is described as advance-, rear-, or flank-guard, the whole being described loosely as "protective duties."

The first two are not very difficult, but the last is enor-

mously complicated [by the fact that while the brigade is marching along a nice level road, the flank detachments are doing an obstacle race across country in order to keep up with them.

Further, in accordance with the good army motto, "Never do anything yourself that you can make your subaltern do," you decree that the responsibility for communication shall extend inward from Private Wallace towards headquarters, so that if the Brigadier decides to change his direction of march and right wheel, or perhaps turn about and go home, and Private Wallace struggling through a wood three miles away on the left flank does not discover it and goes on and loses himself, *he* alone is responsible.

The battalion is represented by "Rupy of Bavaria," and a cadet with a flag, walking dreamily along the highroad to Hudnall. About 1200 yards or so to the left, across the fields, three platoons of the company, under Cadet Greenway, are ploughing their methodical way under the eagle-eyed supervision of Gamaliel. They are the main flank-guard. Six or seven hundred yards farther to the left, fringing a small wood which interposes between them and the rest of the company, is No. 1 platoon.

About three hundred yards to the left again is a small party of half a dozen men under Lance-Corporal Rose. They are the flank-party from No. 1 platoon, and their route

is still more difficult, as it lies through a tangle of low brush-wood and furze. Beyond them is a single weary figure that we can recognise even at this distance. These round contours can belong to none but Cadet Ball.

Some two miles ahead the slopes of Hudnall Common show up clear in the patch of bright sunlight, but the valley down into which the company is moving is all in shadow, for the day is mostly cloudy, save where in the little village nestling round the church, at the bridge over the narrow stream of the Went, a single beam of light breaking through the clouds gilds the weathercock on the grey old Norman church. Beyond, in between the marshy banks, flows slowly the little stream, as yet scarcely knee-deep.

Phayle and Lewis are busy between the flank-party and flank-guard proposing various conundrums. These take the shape of informing the unfortunate Greenway that he is being shelled from all four points of the compass, and what's he going to do about it? Before he has really made up his mind on the point, Phayle intimates that two machine-guns have opened on his company, in fours at the present moment. Greenway feverishly adjures the platoons to extend with all speed. As they spread themselves out in the plough, Lewis produces a squadron of enemy cavalry from the depths of his imagination and flings them upon the flank of the line, and in-

quires if Greenway has any counter-move ready. Wiping the sweat off his brow, the wretched youth stammers out still more incoherent orders, until Lewis mercifully puts him out of his misery by informing him that he is now a casualty, and he retires gratefully to the ranks, his mantle descending on another less-favoured cadet.

Thus the company pursues its painful way, while the cadets are dragged out at intervals to do all sorts of mental gymnastics of the above description. Lewis terms this practice "little tactical appreciations." The cadets' term for them is not so polished.

But they serve the all-important purpose of making the cadets think, or at least try to, instead of spending the time wondering how long it will be before they get back to camp. The average cadet, like the average Tommy, has a marvellous faculty of allowing his intellect to remain absolutely dormant the while the body mechanically performs its more or less ordered movements in response to the whistles or signals of his commanders, and consequently, unless some form of mental gymnastics is introduced, the exercises become valueless.

About half-past one it begins to rain, and as the flank-party, owing to a change in the direction of march, has successfully lost itself, Lewis takes the opportunity offered by the shelter of a small copse to close the company and bid it "cook lunches."

"Now for some real fun," murmurs Gamaliel sardonically, as he watches the cadets' expressions of dismay at the order. True, it was not entirely unexpected, since they had each been served out with raw meat and potatoes before starting, but they had hoped to be allowed to go hungry and not be compelled to adopt the desperate alternative of cooking their own meals.

Not more than two or three of them appeared to have the vaguest idea of how to set about it. They produced their mess-tins from their packs and looked distastefully at the tins and their contents. As a matter of fact the army mess-tin, capably handled, can produce a three-course dinner quite successfully, despite the fact that it is merely a semi-circular tin utensil rather like a cake box, the bottom portion serving as sauce-pan, the lid as frying-pan. *But* capable handling is essential, and the cadets' handling is anything in the world except capable.

The officers and the cherubim N.C.O.'s flitted hither and thither, instructing, coaxing, urging. Little does the public know what "cordons bleus" were lost to the world when Rupy of Bavaria and Verger joined the Army, and Phayle would bring peace and solace to many a harassed mater-familias in these days of servant troubles. Doubtless when the war is over the servant problem will be finally solved by the ex-cherubim-cook-general.

By degrees the cadets learned: the foolishness of

putting empty sauce-pans on blazing fires was ocularly demonstrated when the bottom of Cadet Greenway's mess-tin burnt cut; while Robinson learned for the first time the art of boiling potatoes, and felt a wholly new reverence for the downstairs presence that produced these articles for his daily consumption, and to which he had never before given a moment's thought.

Corporal Meadows learned the art of greasing a frying-pan prior to use, and wondered no longer that a good cook was an essential to a house. He registered a mental vow not to rage next time when his breakfast was five minutes late as, half-blinded by the acrid wood smoke, on his knees on the wet turf, he wrestled with a refractory fire.

One or two despairing fainthearts requested permission to be spared the cooking and allowed to lunch off bread and cheese, but authority was relentless. Cooking was one of the thousand and one things an officer had to instruct his men in, and "save he learn no man may teach," so back they went to their smoky fires.

Gradually hope began to dawn. Carlton, the scout, with two fellow-spirits, was observed to be about to begin a true Savoy lunch of his own concoction; while Cadet Ball, on looking into his mess-tin, seeing what half an hour ago had been some fragments of raw potatoes and meat floating in water showing signs of turning into something faintly resembling an Irish stew, took

heart of grace and fanned his fire more vigorously.

Eventually all had produced something not remotely unlike cooked food, and the cherubim withdrew to eat their own lunch under a neighbouring tree.

Just as the company was assembling to march back to the bivouac, the missing flank-party turned up, to be greeted with remarks of derision by their more favoured comrades who had had no particular chance of losing themselves.

Lewis lectured them on their evil ways, and pointed out that the responsibility for keeping communication lay with the protective detachment, as laid down in the official manuals. "And now," he concluded, "nothing like practice to perfect things. You will do flank-guard all the way back; and as we are going fast, you will have to run all the way," which same they did.

"They won't lose themselves again," said Gamaliel, as on arrival in camp they saw the perspiring figures of the flankers crawl into their bivvies. "Nor any of the other children either for some time."

Next day Lewis remarked at dinner, "Remember how we

made Rose and his party double back all the way yesterday. Well, in the evening he approached me with a pleasant deferential air and asked me if I'd like a copy of the German Field Service Regulations. I didn't quite know what he was at, so said 'Yes.' Then he went on to say that he thought it was sounder than our book in certain places; so I said, 'M—yes.' 'I've marked one or two points that struck me as very sound, sir,' was his parting remark.

"I didn't quite spot his little game till I found a paragraph he'd underlined where it was laid down for the Hun that the main body should always keep connection with the protective detachments. Then I twigged.

"Cunning old bird, isn't he? But I got back at him, 'cos I sent back the book with a mark at a paragraph where the Hun General Staff lay down that 'in war there are no recognised rest days'; and pencilled in it: 'This book appears to be *very* sound, Rose. I think we shall adopt it as our Bible; and since it says there are no rest days in war, we shall have no more week-end leave.' We score last trick, I think!!!"

"GANPAT."

TEN LINES.

A STUDY IN SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY.

It is a well-known rule of the drama that the dramatist should have no secrets from his audience. This is not intended to mean that the audience must know everything that is coming in the play, but the main lines they must know. They know, for example, that Lady Teazle is behind the screen, that Charley's Aunt has got on trousers under her skirt, that Viola is not Sebastian, that Rosalind is a girl, that Bottom is a weaver. They know that Macbeth is going to murder Duncan, that Hamlet has the poisoned rapier, that it is no rat behind the arras, that Cæsar will not read the petition; they understand what the tinkle of the sleigh bells means, what will be the end of Faust's bargain, why Absolute is like Cerberus, "three gentlemen at once," and whether Hardecastle's house is an inn. There are exceptions of course. Captain Redwood in the old melodrama of "Jim the Penman" was a striking example. But such surprises in serious drama are rare.

The reason is plain enough. It is so difficult to follow the action—even with all the hints the dramatist gives us—that, were he to set to work to mislead, we should be lost. Dramas are either a straggling piece of life condensed—years crammed into hours—or the intricate play of conflicting motives

upon that least understandable of things, other people's minds. And if the audience lose the thread they are puzzled, irritated, and bored. Therefore things are made easy. The Greeks had tragic and comic masks, the sock and the buskin; we have abandoned these, but we still have some keys given us. An opera hat and a cigar mark the villain as surely as a pot-hat and a pipe reveal the comic man: snow and the lime-light pursue the heroine, stark staring mad in white satin: the bars of Haydn's Surprise prelude the apparition of the pantomime demon: a flash of lightning introduces Mephistopheles; and, that there may be no mistake, the ladies of the chorus are always photographed with an artless smile revealing rows of pearly teeth that recall simultaneously to our minds the highest efforts of dental surgery and the Biblical text about "ivory, apes, and peacocks." So we know where we are.

Yet another thing comes from this knowledge: we—the audience—are put in a good temper; *we* see, *we* know; *we* are clever where the characters are blind; *we* have puzzled it all out. So we enjoy being "in the know": the "asides" are all plain to us and the mystification clear. It is the same joy which is felt by the expounder of the riddle:

Samson had it; the Delphic oracle had it; the setter of the base booby-trap chuckles over it; all share the superiority of knowledge. We know that Sir Toby is going to catch a tartar in Sebastian by mistake for Viola, that Titania is enamoured of an ass's head, that the screen is going to be upset and reveal "Lady Teazle—by all that's damnable"—and we share Puck's joy in the reflection, "Lord, what fools these mortals be."

Puck's remark, however, takes us a stage further. It discloses another source of this self-satisfaction in the audience. They know—but their knowledge is *superhuman* knowledge. The secrets of the world—in the play—are laid bare. The characters misunderstand, misinterpret, are puzzled, are at cross purposes; but we—the audience—know. From us there are, for the moment, no secrets hid. That is why our knowledge is superhuman, for such an attitude is Divine. "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." In that sense we are not far wrong in calling the gallery "the gods." For the brief hour they *are* the gods: they applaud virtue and greet the villain with a venomous hiss. And short is the career of the unfortunate actor who is clumsy or luckless enough to provoke the gallery to ridicule; of such it may truly be said, those that the gods laugh at, die young.

Here, again, if we turn to tragedy we get one real basis of it—the merciless working

of fate; Nemesis, the slow foot, the power, uncontrolled and uncontrollable by human agency, which pushes man to the brink, just as in Edgar Allan Poe's tale the wretched prisoner in total darkness finds himself pushed by the slowly closing walls towards the hollow unplumbed depths of the pit in the floor of his cell. So the inexorable walls of circumstance in Greek drama pressed Man, their prisoner, to the unknown depths of Fate. Nothing could break the power, could stay or hinder the working of the machine. There was no escape, and no help: inch by inch, unseen and lonely, the victim went to his doom.

Now let us picture ourselves superhuman. The darkness is no darkness to us; we see the whole agony, and on the eyes with which we regard it will depend the description that we give. The victim is our bitterest enemy—unforgiveable—and we have the Tragedy of Revenge; or he is one who is dear to us, and we have the Tragedy of Helpless Love; or he is a sinner above all sinners, and we have the Tragedy of Justice; or he is innocent, and we have the Tragedy of Injustice; or we do not care, and we have the Tragedy of Indifference. That is one of the deepest of tragedies. When Olympus echoed to the laughter of the gods over human woes, then, if the expression be allowed, the devil grinned too.

So the High Gods sit and look on pitilessly while Agamemnon fares back to his doom,

and Œdipus goes on his blind wanderings, and Medea teaches Jason what it means to embark on rash marriage with the New Woman. . . .

Something of this kind is the setting of Shakespeare's "Richard III." The hero is a fiend; battle, murder, and sudden death his associates; mercilessly (in Shakespeare's reading of him) he clears his way to the throne. His brother, his wife, a king, three royal princes, his friend Buckingham, are all sacrificed—apart from the small deer of Hastings, Rivers, Grey, and Vaughan; and if we imagine the "bag" laid out in a row we shall notice that it was almost entirely made up of Yorkists—his own party. Richard Crookback has been the instrument which has carried out the curse of Heaven invoked by Margaret of Anjou *on his own house*; and when Henry of Richmond ends him we echo his words, "The bloody dog is dead!" Yet we have some admiration for the dog; he was a plucky dog, too, and he met fate in dogged fashion.

Far other is the tragedy of Richard II. Richard III. is the tragedy of circumstance, of fate—inexorable. Richard II. is the tragedy of character, of hope—irresolute. It will be remembered (which is Augustus de Morgan's famous euphemism for "it has been forgotten") that Richard II. was the son of England's darling, the Black Prince; and if ever a young king had the chance of becoming the idol of a nation

it was this Richard. Men remembered his father, the "very perfect gentle knight" of chivalry, and the glories of Crécy and Poitiers. Here was the opportunity to bring back the "great days in the distance enchanted"; but the opportunity was lost—and here lay the tragedy—within the character of Richard himself. There is much that is winning about Richard, as Shakespeare gives him to us: the soul of a poet, the dreamer of great dreams, the sayer of fine sayings. But as a king he fails hopelessly. If ever there was a round peg in a square hole it is Richard: there is no stability in him anyhow: whatever he does turns, and turns wrong. At the outset his supporters, Mowbray and Bolingbroke, quarrel; Richard bids them decide the issue by battle—picturesque and exciting scene—and every one gathers to the fray. Then as they advance to the contest the king interferes—

Marshal. Sound, trumpets; and set forward, combatants.

(*A charge sounded.*)

Stay, the king hath thrown his warder down.

K. Rich. Let them lay by their helmets and their spears,

And both return back to their chairs again:

Withdraw with us; and let the trumpets sound

While we return these dukes what we decree.

(*A long flourish.*)

And then he declares the combat off.

Let us put this into modern dress. Imagine a contest that stirs the soul of the

populace—a final cup-tie between, shall we say, with vague appropriateness, Derby County and Nottingham Forest. The lists are set and the bets are made; the rivals emerge from their pavilions—when the referee, in phrase befitting the Conscientious Objector, bids them withdraw and tells the band to play instead. . . . Would such a referee be thought a sportsman?

Then this poor-spirited king goes on to affront his old nobility and promote upstarts, and breaks his word over John of Gaunt's lands, and heedlessly sets off to Ireland (about as far as to America nowadays) just when he is most wanted in England; and while his practical-minded cousin Henry of Bolingbroke is politic in making friends and gathering men, Richard, on hearing the news of his cousin's rebellion, can only say, "Let's talk of worms, and graves, and epitaphs," and invite "spiders, heavy-gaited toads and stinging nettles," to "do annoyance to the treacherous feet" of his enemies. Then he surrenders—without a blow—but with endless fine and pathetic talk, and eventually is sent off a prisoner to Pomfret:—

"I towards the north,
Where shivering cold and sickness
pines the clime,"

and in his going

"Men's eyes
Did scowl on gentle Richard; no man
cried 'God save him!'
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home:
But dust was thrown upon his sacred
head. . . ."

Because he was a failure—and the more was expected the deeper the failure.

But here comes a change: were this all Richard might lack our sympathy, and Shakespeare was far too good a craftsman to make this mistake. He sets to work to bring home to the audience the tragedy of Richard's fate in a way that should appeal to all, and does so with the masterly brevity which marks his skill; and yet—incredible as it may seem—the brief scene in which he does this is almost always omitted when the play is played, has escaped the commentators, and passed unregarded by most readers.

This scene is Act V. Scene 4: it is so short that we can have it in full. It runs thus—

Enter EXTON *and a* SERVANT.

Exton. Didst thou not mark the king, what words he spake,
'Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?'

Was it not so?

Servant. These were his very words.

Exton. 'Have I no friend?' quoth he: he spake it twice,
And urged it twice together, did he not?

Servant. He did.

Exton. And speaking it, he wistly looked on me;
As who should say, 'I would thou wert the man

That would divorce this terror from my heart;'

Meaning the king at Pomfret. Come, let's go:

I am the king's friend, and will rid his foe.

[*Exeunt.*]

That is all; it can be read at a glance, and one feels inclined to label it a mere "carpenter's scene"—a mere

kill-time scene played before a drop curtain, while a hideous commotion behind indicates that the stage carpenters are busy erecting "Pomfret Castle" where the next scene is to take place. If Pomfret Castle has to be put up in five minutes there must be some noise made over it.

Yet these ten lines display a piece of dramatic insight and skill that is almost startling.

It will be noticed, first, that the audience at once guess that Exton is going to murder the king; they have not seen him before in the play, but his first words make it clear; and, beyond this, after these three brief speeches Exton says no word more till the king is dead by his hand. He murders Richard without ever speaking to him.

This by the way; now for the point. Shakespeare, having shown the tragedy of Richard's incompetence, having displayed him as visionary, unwise, talking where he should act, and acting where he should have paused to think, now wishes to raise the audience to sympathy for him. As a failure he is dethroned: he has given place to a better man: all the world applauds his cousin Henry's treason—for it has prospered. But . . . but . . . after all, what had Richard done to merit death? Was he not the rightful heir, the Black Prince's son? Was he so bad after all? Was it so light a matter to murder a king?

This heinousness of Richard's murder is brought home in this scene with few strokes, but

they are strokes of a hand that never erred. Observe Exton's words. He quotes the (new) king's question—

"Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?"

. . . "Have I no friend *will rid me*" . . . and in the mind of the audience wakes a thought . . . had not this been said before . . . and by a king? . . . Ay, and by a King Henry, too? Stay, what were the words? "Are none of the cowards eating my bread *will rid me* of this . . ." and straight the four knights set off from France and answered the second King Henry's question by the murder of the great Archbishop Becket, on the altar-steps of his own cathedral. And there, in the gathering dusk, lay the body of one whom his office should have protected . . . alone, hacked and bleeding. That murder had thrilled Christendom with horror. So the fourth Henry, "Have I no friend will rid me of this . . ." and Exton's ears are as quick to catch the hint as were de Tracy's.

But Exton goes on—

"And speaking it, he wistly looked on me;

As who should say: 'I would thou wert the man

That would divorce this terror from my heart.'"

"I would thou wert the man," . . . and again the phrase wakes in the audience's mind a recollection. "*Thou wert the man . . . that would divorce.*" And what they recollect begins thus: "There

were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor," and ends, "And Nathan said to David '*Thou art the man.*'"

If Becket's murder was, to an Elizabethan audience, the worst crime committed at the wish of an English king, the slaughter of Uriah the Hittite, set in the forefront of the hottest battle by David's order, that the King might possess his wife, is the meanest and perhaps the basest crime in the Old Testament. So Exton declares himself to be like de Tracey and like Joab to carry out his master's murderous wish—to "rid him," and to "divorce" this terror from his heart.

See with what skill the approaching death of Richard is painted; it will take rank with the slaughter of Becket, with the murder of Uriah! How deep is the guilt of those who plan it!

Are we to doubt whether the audience would "see"? Surely Shakespeare meant them to see, and we must remember that there were fewer stories and what we call "literary allusions" then. All would know the story of Becket's death and the circumstances of Nathan's parable, and most would be quick to place "will rid me" and "Thou art the man."

But is there nothing more? After all, neither Becket—sturdy prelate—nor Uriah, simple and honest soldier, are much like Richard II. They died violent deaths, and so (in Shakespeare's version) did Richard; but one of them died

in a brawl and the other in battle, both suddenly, unexpectedly. On the other hand, Richard's whole life and character led up to the long-foreseen tragedy of his death. Has Shakespeare no other and no after comparison? Was there not another murder even more infamous, even more permanently graven upon all minds, which will furnish a comparison.

Of course there was; and every reader knows that throughout the play Richard's own words suggest it again and again. Thus he says, on hearing of Bolingbroke's levies—

"For every man that Bolingbroke hath
pressed
To lift shrewd steel against our golden
crown,
God for his Richard hath in heavenly
pay
A glorious angel."

The Bishop of Carlisle implies the same likeness when he says to Bolingbroke that if he persists—

"This land be called
The field of Golgotha and dead men's
skulls."

Richard again, when he is in Bolingbroke's power—

"Though some of you with Pilate wash
your hands
Showing an outward pity; yet you
Pilates
Have here delivered me to my sour
cross,
And water cannot wash away your sin."

And in the last moment, when he is in prison and the murderous Exton is even at the door, a groom comes in and greets him with the words, "Hail,

Royal Prince!" as tragic (though Richard characteristically puts them by with one of his bitter jests) as the "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Over and over again Shakespeare likens the betrayal and death of Richard to the betrayal and death of our Lord. If it seem an impious likeness, it is well to remember that Shakespeare did not invent the likeness. It was common phrase in England in the fifteenth century. It permeated the whole of the anti-Lancastrian party, whether it was Mortimer and his claims in Henry IV.'s day or York and his claims in Henry VI.'s. All of them assert that, as King Richard was made away with by his traitor cousin, it is their duty to avenge the death of the Holy One. An odd accident kept this alive. Richard's mother was Joan of Kent—it is strange that the Black Prince, star of chivalry, did not marry till he was thirty-one, and then chose a widow two years his senior with three children—and Joan's badge was the "White Hind." This Richard converted to the "White Hart," and took to himself. Now the Hart—or rather the Hind, for the word is mistranslated in *Quemadmodum*, and should read "like as the hind desireth the water-brooks"—was a favourite

image in Christian symbolism. It stood for the *pure soul*, and was easily transferred from the Christian ideal of the pure soul to the model of all purity, our Lord Himself. Consequently the badge of the White Hart, Richard's cognisance, was accepted with a species of religious fervour, and Shakespeare is straining nothing when so often in the play he makes Richard use comparisons from the life and death of Christ.

Do we, in this brief scene where Becket's murder and David's crime are brought in, also find an allusion to the greatest crime of all, the crime of Calvary? We do. Says Exton—

"I am the king's friend and will rid his
foe."

"I am the *king's friend*." . . .
"If thou let this man go thou art not Cæsar's friend." So Exton all unwitting declares himself to the audience to be as Pilate.

It is only a carpenter's scene, just ten lines long: it might well pass unregarded, and, as has been said, it is commonly omitted when the play is played. But what a deal of light it throws on the play—and on the dramatist.

And if you deny all this, why, "God comfort thy capacity."

MASTER HOLOFERNES.

THE SCENE OF WAR.—I.

ALEXANDRIA.

WE are at anchor in Alexandria harbour, waiting to sail for Greece.

In these simple words there is a magic of suggestion that transports one into a bygone age. How many have waited here since Herodotus came wandering to these shores; how many a traveller has looked out upon the wine-dark sea that links these aged sites with the classic beauty of Hellas?

But it is another world to-day. The ship is in the hands of the police, and upon each deck and in a variety of secluded corners there is an African in uniform, while a couple of officers smoke cigarettes and pass the day on deck. Nobody knows when we shall start; but some say it will be soon, pointing to the steam at the funnel, and others say it will be never. I ask one of the officers why we are detained. His view is that transports full of troops are passing across the Mediterranean, and that until these are far on their way and out of sight we must wait, lest we should give information of their whereabouts to a German submarine.

For all Greek ships are suspect, and my informant has no doubt that they have given help and information to the enemy. There are rumours

also—as of ancient days—that the Greek Cabinet has resigned, that Athens is in a tumult. Who can say?

Yet here are facts. For even as we talk a troop-ship full of khaki-clad men from India, Australia, New Zealand, the islands of Great Britain, weighs anchor and steams majestically out to sea, her stern gun pointing defiantly against the sky. The same sinister token presents itself at the stern of all the ships in port that do not sail under a neutral flag; and an old battleship stands sentinel at the mouth of the harbour. There are hospital ships, too, white and dainty as a summer girl, with broad green stripes, like ribbons, and red crosses on their sides, waiting for their freight of wounded and dying men.

But for these symptoms of the times Alexandria smiles as of yore, the small-winged yachts sail to and fro, and the sun shines on the blue waters. At night the scene in the ancient harbour is yet more beautiful: the red and green lights make a jewelled pattern against the crowding hulks of the colliers and the transports; the stars shine out in the clear Egyptian sky; the sea, a lustrous ultramarine, sways with a placid content; and the lighthouse flames and fades

and flames again, like the beating of a heart that is never still. Does it matter, after all, whether we sail or not?

CRETE.

We are moving at last towards Crete. It is a still day of the halcyon kind that stirred the poets of old, and life is for the moment a priceless gift. Now and then a gull flies past, a pair of doves flutter beside the ship, and a quail out of her reckoning falls bewildered on the deck. It is hard to believe that under this smiling surface submarines are afoot, and that the great sea-going ships, with their freight of women and children and men going to and from our East, pass across it at the peril of their lives.

But we are soon reminded of the fact by the sight of a little fleet of trawlers and destroyers upon the horizon, and the approach of one of the former, which sends a boat off to us, while the destroyer moves in a great circle about the ship. Two naval officers climb up a rope-ladder to the deck; the Archon, or Capitano as he is known in the vernacular, is summoned and his papers examined, while the boat with four seamen sways and swings beside the ship.

When the scrutiny is over, the officers go over the side by the rope-ladder; the boat moves off with the splash of oars, the destroyer sweeps round once more in a final circle of inspection to see that nothing has been thrown into

the sea; and the picture that lingers of the blue heaving waters, the little white boat making across them, the hard-looking grey destroyer, is one that those of us who are British regard with a touch of silent pride. For it tells us that the dominion of the sea is ours.

The propellers begin to revolve, and we are once more free to move upon our voyage, the outlines of the Isle of Crete faintly visible through the sun-haze on the horizon.

At dawn, when I awake to the roaring of the crane and the sounds of cargo being unshipped, there is the moon hanging low over the snows of Ida, and the gleam and flash of a lighthouse over the white houses of Herakleion.

At eight, in the bright sunlight, we make in a painted boat for the little harbour, and enter within its old fortified walls, that still bear upon them in escutcheon the winged Lion of St Marc. The scene is one of clarified beauty, the white walls and the lighthouse tower shining against the blue water and the grey-green slopes of the mountains. Within the safe enclosure there cluster the small island craft, laden with wine and firewood; the sailors are busy caulking and climbing about the cordage, and from the old grey walls

of the fort that Francesco Morosini defended so valiantly against the Turks, there hang the brown nets of the fishermen, like a shroud of lace.

We climb the marble stairs that usher the traveller into this ancient seaport of Knossos, past fading buildings and new embellishments, into the little *agora* or market-place, where a great fountain of marble with lions and bas-reliefs testifies to Venetian glories. The narrow streets are full of Christians

and Moslems, now apparently at peace with each other, and over the front of the barracks where Prince George as High Commissioner lived, a Turkish inscription on grey marble still gleams in the Cretan sun. A little way off there is a Turkish cemetery full of marble grave-stones with turbaned heads. And beyond these there are the green slopes of the lower hills, and high pyramidal peaks, and the snow-splashed flanks of Ida.

ATHENS.

I came to Athens with my mind set upon the War and its incidents, resolved to spare no time for ancient memories. But there are some things that are impossible. Constantine, Venezelos, the indefatigable Baron Schenk, "qui a acheté tout le monde," as they tell you here; the politics of modern Europe and the sway and swing of the War, seemed to dwindle into insignificance at the Parthenon, when the setting sun bathed its fluted columns, and the lovely women of the Eretheion came to life once more in its glow. And that immortal landscape with its violet and tawny hues, its gleam of grey-blue sea, its dark cypresses and silvering olive-trees, its historic sites that are for ever a possession of the human race; how it turned one's thoughts away from the incidents of the hour. For here was something that was perfect and therefore never to be surpassed, rendered im-

mortal by the magic of Art and the soaring spirit of Man.

In the evening I joined the populace on the terrace by the Zappeion. I saw before me the thronging crowd, the statues, the gardens full of stocks and orange-flowers, whose perfume filled the air, and beyond these the Corinthian columns of the Olympian Jove; the Acropolis, silent yet eloquent—as the Gods—and I wondered how long the Greeks would be content with the humiliating rôle that has been forced upon them. For wherever I went, and to whomsoever I spoke, I learnt that the hearts of the people were with the free nations—that they hated the Prussian ideal, and longed for the hour when they could step out upon the right road, the path to Honour. There were exceptions, of course; there was the money instinct in those who were gaining by their neutrality; and there were the upper classes.

"*Tout le snobisme est avec le Roi*," as an old Russian Diplomat, who was once an Ambassador, put it to me. But there were many also who revered the King and were grateful to him for what he had done in the past.

"If we could but have the King and our Venezelos together, all would be well," they

said; yet they spoke as it were in terms of a vain expectation. Listening to all these people, I could not doubt that after a period of travail the Hellenes would rise once more for the honour of Greece; for one cannot live in the shadow of the Gods without being stirred to great undertakings.

VENEZELOS.

One morning it was my fortune to call on Venezelos. The great statesman's house is near the Place of the Constitution, which confronts the Royal Palace. There is a certain fitness in such neighbourhoods. You turn up it through the street of Lycabettos, and if you have an eye for the permanent you will stay your footsteps more than once to look up the entrancing vista of the sunlit street; of the grey-green hill that was here before the Achæans came to Hellas; of the Attic blue of the sky; and of the white clouds shaping and changing upon its face.

It was upon those things that my eyes were set, when my companion touched my arm and said—

"We are at the house of Venezelos."

He knocked at the door, and after some delay it was opened a few inches, and a rough Cretan face looked out with an air of reserve and inquiry. Behind it, in the shadow, I could see that there were others. It was evident that Venezelos was guarded. Upon the stairs there were yet others:

simple men from the island, who love this man of their own blood, the champion of their race.

From those feudal, almost primitive, surroundings, I passed into a large hall, and so into an ante-room, in which others were waiting. Thus, if I had not known who the occupant was, I should have known that I was in the house of some great personage whose business it was to play a part in the world,—a man who was looked up to and sought after by others, yet one who was simple in his ways.

In this ante-room there were two portraits, one of Venezelos, the other of the King. So it is throughout Greece. I had leisure to study them both, and while I was doing so the door opened, and I was alone with Venezelos.

Slightly grey, the man before me had a fresh and healthy look, clear, firm blue eyes, or so they seemed, full of a limpid intelligence and perception. His manner was simple and kind, and only so far reserved as his place in the world necessitated. One felt instinctively

that he was a man who had nothing to conceal. It was a face altogether pleasing, considerate, yet strong, by reason of the intellect behind it. It was the face of a thinker, who in grappling with the immediate issue sees always before him the far distant conclusion. A man whose face inspired confidence by its quiet strength, and affection by its benevolence—the face of a *civilised* man. There was humour in it too, and a touch of irony. And as he spoke, playing with a little ivory paper-cutter in his hand, shrewdly cognisant of the issues involved, tranquil as a child in spite of his own critical position and that of his country, I realised that I was in the presence of one of the world's great men—of a man of genius. I thought that he might be deemed impulsive in the sense of warming to a great ideal; but it was evident that his body was under perfect control, his will the instrument of a brain that was clear as crystal. And yet there was a touch in his grey-blue eyes of the Dreamer, of the man who sees visions. And that no doubt is the secret of his greatness, as it is of his

momentary eclipse. For all men do not see far.

There was a piquant contrast offered by an autographed portrait of the King which I saw in the ante-room. Here was a royal personage—a soldier, bluff, resolute, proud, and obstinate; the brother-in-law, as we know, of an Emperor, but also a man overmatched in intellect by his great Minister.

Here it may be in a nutshell is the whole story of present-day Greece, and it is in the clash of these temperaments that the conflicting streams which have left the country enfeebled at a great crisis in its history find their source. The position has been a difficult one for both; but whereas one could at best have snatched but a temporary success, the other has been eternally in the right. Nature will have her way; and in this little peninsula, whose fame is written upon the souls of men, there is no room for any but a free people.

King Constantine, for all his faith in the German armies, for all the support of his friends, has never had the shadow of a chance.

VOYAGE TO SALONICA.

It was nine o'clock of a clear night and the scent of the Orange Gardens was filling the streets of the city when I left Athens for Salonica. The Piræus was very beautiful, with its numberless lights reflected in the still blue

waters that yet swayed with some hidden impulse of life, and the pattern of its masts and rigging cut in intricate fretwork against the starry sky. In the rough wine-shops by the quays, girls were dancing before the foot-lights

for the pleasure of the assembled mariners, and the sounds of music and of voices were borne into the still purity of the night. There were no steamers in the days of Themistocles; but in all other ways the life that confronted me was the life of those bygone days when Greece was at her prime.

I took a boat across the harbour to an Italian ship, whose smoking funnel showed that she was under steam for an early start.

I was the only passenger. For the Greeks, profiting by their neutrality, carry nearly all the maritime trade; and it is only a traveller who is pressed for time who will travel by a militant boat. The Stewardess informed me that her last ship had been submarined off Crete; and the Purser drew my attention to a pig upon the sideboard that was carved out of a Citron with the legend "Guglielmo and Co." inscribed upon it.

I turned into my cabin, opened the port-hole to let in the soft night air, and slept till morning.

The next day was one of the most perfect that I have ever spent in my life. When I rose and went on deck, I found that we were leaving behind us the Saronic Gulf, with Cape Colonna, the ancient Sunion, on our left, and Keos the Isle of Simonides a little ahead of us on the right. It was a morning for the gods: the sea an Attic blue, the sky luminous and puffed with white clouds, while a host of fishermen's boats, with their white sails spread

to the wind, pursued their vocation in the front of Keos, long, blue, and mountainous beyond them. Then suddenly we came to a pause; a signal or message was run up at the mast-head and a black trawler was seen approaching with a touch of white foam at her prow and the tricolour at her helm. She came on to challenge our purpose, and we waited for her quietly, for she was a friend.

"It was just so," said the Stewardess, "that the Boche came up to us and gave us five minutes to leave our ship before he blew it up," and as she spoke the gulls flew low about us, and the sea was as tranquil as summer sleep. It was a scene of peace and beauty, upon which these episodes of war seemed entirely irrelevant.

The trawler, with her guns pointing fore and aft, sent a boat alongside, and the crew stood to their oars, while the officer in khaki came on board, saluted the captain, and accompanied him to the chart-room on the bridge.

The ship's papers were examined with care, some questions were put, and the visit came to an end after fifty minutes of detention.

Upon the invitation of the Skipper I remained on the bridge enjoying the exquisite view that spread before me, through the tracery of masts and rigging, of a blue sea and jutting headlands, and gulls flying in the sunlight; and as we advanced into the Golden Channel there was Andros the bounteous Isle of Dionusos on our right, with cloud shadows

playing above his brows, and white lustrous reflections from them on the tranquil sea; with Eubœa like the mainland on our left. The Canale d'Oro, whose name recalls the days when Venice ruled along these shores, is a strait some eight miles wide, though to the eye of the traveller it looks much less, and it is very carefully guarded, as we could see, by the submarine destroyers and trawlers of the Allied Fleet.

So the day went on and we took our placid course in Elysian weather, slowly leaving Andros, which has become known since the war as the Isle of the Forty Millionaires, on our bows as we turned Eubœa and made northward between it and Skyros and the Sporades.

A sailing boat, a cabin stored with books and rugs, a halcyon sea such as this, a woman to share these things and lend them the one additional grace; upon such pleasing fancies did our minds run under the serene influences of the hour and the place.

But nothing lasts for very long, and by six o'clock the day was closing in, grey and sombre after its brilliant noon, and we found ourselves passing by some instinctive emotion from the irresponsibility and contentment of the day into a state of some uneasiness as night approached. For now behind us upon the darkening horizon there were visible the vast outlines of a cruiser and transports laden with Serbian troops from Corfu for the Balkan front. They rapidly approached us, and the captain

gave them his close attention. He was not happy in their company.

"In the night," he mumbled, "who will know the difference between a ship full of troops and mine?"

And with that the telegraph rang and the ship made a great semicircle out of her track, leaving the ship of war and her transports well to the starboard. At this moment we were running parallel to Skyros, with Eubœa faintly visible on our left.

Half-way through dinner, the captain came down to the saloon with an old-fashioned "Bon appetit, Monsieur," and presently poured himself out a glass of Marsala, cleared his throat, and unburdened himself of the object of his visit.

"During the dark night," he said, "we shall be incurring the minimum of risk, for all the lights on this ship will be extinguished; so that unless we have the bad luck to come plump on a submarine," and he laughed uncomfortably, "we shall be safe; but at dawn—well, I tell you frankly anything may happen at dawn. You will at the least be well advised to sleep in your clothes, and to have yourself called at 4 A.M. They do not usually touch our ships, but *avec ces sales bêtes*, who can say?" And he shrugged his shoulders with loathing and contempt. The burden of his after-talk was of these Boches who kill women and children; of the Greeks, who want everything without fighting for it; of the Americans, who are like the

Greeks on a large scale; and of "Wilson, who writes Notes." I could see that he was anxious and worried, and the strain of these eighteen months was written on his sea-worn face.

The sky was partially clouded overhead as I turned in, the stars only showing here and there through their drifting veil. A light twinkling some distance ahead of us came from the tail-end of the cruiser as she piloted the Serbian transports, themselves invisible in the sombre night. Our own ship moved without a light, like a ghost upon the seas. In the early morning when I went on deck I was greeted by the majestic vision of the Thessalian Olympus, his massive brow silver-white with snow and half-veiled in moving clouds. The white villages clustered like infants at his knees, and a white-winged ship sailed upon the quiet sea. There also was the snowy cone of Ossa, with white hamlets on his slopes, and behind us Pelion, grey and cold. On our right were the islands of the Sporades.

The Olympian chain extended along the horizon. It was natural for the Greeks to connect the great mountain with their gods, for it manifestly dominates this world, and by its great beauty claims as of right the wonder and the homage of men. Like the Pyrenean Canigou at the other end of the Mediterranean, it rises straight from the sea into the sunlight, 9794 feet in height. And here at its base, the lovely Vale of Tempe with

its Peneios rushing to the sea, lies in sheltered security.

It was in the midst of these classic scenes that we were once more confronted with unmistakable signs of modern war. Beside us a trawler was persistently busy with her net dragging the placid sea for mines, and as we approached Salonica another steamed before us to indicate the passage. A low green coast lay upon our right, and in the distance behind the city stretched a line of mountains, and yet another, upon whose uplands three-quarters of a million of men were waiting to engage each other in battle. Under Cape Kara Bournou lay the wreck of a transport, which was torpedoed here in the very waters we were now crossing and in sight of the city. And as we sat on deck enjoying the warm and heartening sunshine, the tranquil scene, there came the sudden whirring of wings as of a great dragon-fly, and a hydroplane flew overhead. The sound of her flight lessened, she passed almost out of sight, then turned and approached us once more, the noise of her engines increasing as she dipped to the water and swept past us with a perfect grace, the airmen waving their hands at us in salutation. And then she flew away and was lost to sight in the blue distance above the white sails of the Italian fishermen and the green fields of the mainland. We had looked for an instant upon the beauty rather than the horror of war.

The low coast-line had the

soft air of some Hampshire countryside by the fringes of the Solent; the clouds soared upwards from the serried mountains in great castles of opal and blue. Upon the foreland of Little Kara Bournou spread the tents of a British encampment. I had last looked upon them in the Sinai desert.

A mist lay over Salonica through which there were faintly visible houses and trees and battlements, the walls as of some old fortress, climbing the downs; while the dark hulks of ships lay brooding in the foreground. It was such a picture, with its diaphanous mists, its touches of blue and green and white, as Turner would have painted.

Slowly we turned to enter this magic place, the crinkled sea interspersed with spaces of silk-like calm. I climbed for a better view to the bridge, where the Captain stood with his megaphone, and there grew up before my eyes a scene of

entrancing interest and beauty. But a hundred yards ahead there moved slowly, with a gliding, sinuous motion, a torpedo boat, and we followed her every movement with a faithful compliance through the mines and nets which spread like fishermen's floats across the vast spaces of the harbour. Beyond them lay the battleships and transports, riding securely at peace; and above them rose the mountains and the cloud-enamelled sky.

As we came at last through the intricate maze, and the destroyer which had guided us moved aside with the grace of a python, I heard beside me, where the skipper stood in the stillness, a sigh as from one whose soul was quit of a burden that had lain upon it. And as I turned to look back, there, behind us, came a boat in full sail, with Olympus shining in blue and silver through its rigging, and lifting his stately brow to the heavens.

SALONICA.

Salonica presents a scene of extraordinary interest and of piquant contrasts. The site alone is one of the finest in the world. Its harbour, doubly sheltered, looks as though it might hold a thousand battleships, and the sea here, as at Constantinople, comes bowing up to its very portals, deep and tranquil, the slave alike of its pleasure-seekers and of the dark and terrible ships of war that hold the city in fee. Behind it, as though to shelter it

from all contact with a rude northern world, rise in a crescent low green hills upon which the cattle pasture; and the ancient town rises slowly up from the sea to these pleasant heights, protected by walls and towers and battlements that display all the charm of the Middle Ages. These old walls have now seen their day; they are visibly falling into decay, and the newer city of villas and workshops has already spread far beyond their limits.

They are like some old fighter, brave of heart but frail of body, who is left behind in time of war in the company of the women and the children, and of little consequence now, though great in his day and generation.

It is a city with a great future, but no one knows what that future will be. Here for the present are the French and the English established in great force, with their ships upon the sea and their armies spread afar upon its encircling mountains, and its streets are thronged with the soldiery of the Western Powers.

No scene from a play could be more diverting or vivid than that which groups itself about the Café of Bastazini on a Sunday afternoon. The Rue Venezelos is a wide thoroughfare where it abuts on the harbour front, with the sea and its shipping at one end, and afar off at the other a dim Turkish bazaar, full of the sentiment of a vanished age.

It is here in this wide thoroughfare, closed to wheeled traffic, that the world collects. Frenchmen, Englishmen, Canadians, Australians, Servians, Greeks, Jews, Turks, all are here in bewildering variety, and there are others to come. Generals, colonels, subalterns, corporals, rank and file; little boys and girls who go to and fro selling papers and furtively collecting those left behind to sell again; older girls, pink of cheek and trim of figure, a little fluttered at the presence in such numbers of the bolder sex; here and there a broken-

down old Turk or grave Moslem turning his beads and clothed in dignity; a Spanish Jew; a porter laden with the bulk of some vast burden, his eyes downcast upon the hard cobbled street. Opposite, a shop,—a branch of the Levantine Harrods, built in the newest style with plate glass and gilt and a sphere upon its roof that stares you in the face and distracts your gaze from the Olympian Jove. There is money in plenty, and this city which has slept so long under Turkish rule is out to gather in with all possible speed the harvest of half a million men who draw pay and have gold to throw away. Now and then from afar off behind the Balkans there comes a Zeppelin or a flight of German planes, and a bomb crashes into the midst of the city. But Salonica lives in the present, and Jew and Greek are instant in their search after the Allies' wealth.

Unfortunately for each of these interesting communities there are both Jews and Greeks, and this goes to the heart of the Children of Israel, who were so happy here in the days of the simple and proud old Turk. "Two Dervishes cannot sleep under the same blanket," as the proverb has it; and there is a sting in this competition under the smiling and prosperous surface of life in Salonica. It is a comedy still when there is so much money to be shared; but a comedy with tragic possibilities when Greek and Jew are left to struggle with each other, and the Allies and their lavish ways

have gone. Hence it comes that Israel is hopeful that the Allies will not march away, and that the brave General Sarraill may elect to stay for good in this delectable corner of the world. And meanwhile the flood of wealth pours on. The proprietor of the Zenodochion Themistocles, now known as the Café of Impregnable Verdun, goes happy to bed with 3000 francs a day in his pocket instead of the 300 which, before the Allies came, marked the highest level of his prosperity; and Solomon figures out that that new contract with the British Army will make him richer by some forty thousand pounds.

In most cities which live by the sea, the port is a quarter left to mariners and shippers and the riff-raff of the harbour; but at Salonica, as at Constantinople and at Venice, port and city are one, and along the narrow Strand you have the hotels and the shops and the big houses on one side of it facing the sea, and on the other the crowded shipping of the harbour. Nearest of all and in contact with the sea wall are the sailing ships of the Island Greeks, the schooners that carry casks of wine and oil and firewood and coal and all the small trade of the country. They lie here in a serried line, swaying and plunging with the sea, their masts and rigging making their old-world pattern against the scene. Each boat has its small cabin, and the name of its owner and the island he hails from written in classic

letters on its stern; and the life of the seafarers clustered within it goes on from morning till dusk, a world apart from the thronging street. Along the street the electric trams shriek and grumble from dawn to midnight, laden with more people than they can properly carry; transport wag-gons grind along the cobbled way; infantry march with a rhythmic action; the legionary tread of the British soldier, the quick step of Piou-Piou; horsemen in the khaki of England, the blue-grey of France, the *dragon* with his horse-tail plumes, the lancer with his pennon, ride upon big horses that have come here from English countrysides and Irish farms; from Normandy, Picardy, and Toulouse; from Australia and New Zealand across the wide imperial seas. But in the old city on the hill where the Moslem population still clings to its homesteads, one is in another world. It is a world of quiet enduring people, who know that they have lost their tide; of great plane-trees spreading their chequered gold over the cobbled streets; of white mosques and soaring minarets, the symbols of a departing faith; of cypresses that sigh beside old fountains inscribed with the names of God; of old ramparts and battlemented towers that still stand up at bay, as though to shepherd the people within. It is by contrast a silent world, invaded only by the sound of church bells, the cry of the Muezzin, the murmur of a people, vague, indefinite, as if it

wished to speak, but knew not what to say.

Down the green slopes of the hills come the cattle at evening from their pastures; outside the old grey walls the people sit: Turkish women in black with their children about them, and the tranquil beauty of the Madonna on their clear-cut faces; old men, too weary and resigned to go away and fight under the banners of Islam.

Here, too, under the old walls, there is the English Cemetery, where lie together the English and the German

dead of a past generation, as members of the one Protestant Communion. There was a time when we even thought of them as next of kin!

And as you look from here beyond the threshold of the city to the sea, your eye is caught by the dim grey outlines of the battleships and destroyers of the Allied Fleet; the summits of the mountains and the sun's red globe, sending his wide rays of gold, as from a mighty searchlight, down upon the marshes of the Vardar Plain.

FLYING.

Out beyond the limits of the city and the rattling of its trams, its little pretences after civilisation and all that goes of bad or good to make a city, there spreads a green world that is entirely given up to peace. The soft grass under foot, the larks singing overhead, the wide sea spreading away beyond the gentle slopes, make a scene that might be culled from the very heart of England.

And yet it is manifest that even here one is upon the very scene and edge of War. The green headland, with its Turkish name, is white with the British tents; the bay is alive with ships, and mules, and horses.

Here, under the awnings of the long lines of hospital tents, the convalescents sit of an evening, enjoying the soft air, looking across the sea to Olympus and the setting sun, smok-

ing their pipes and playing Bridge, in their blue hospital clothes. Here across the fields the nurses walk in twos and threes, the surgeons take the air, when the day's work is nearly done. A little way off some cavalymen are at work on their horses, and their English voices—"Now then, now then!"—ring sharply as across an English yard.

There are vineyards and corn-fields here, and orchards and mulberries and apricots to the edge of the cliffs overlooking the sea; and along the pathways soldiers in khaki walk—solid, phlegmatic, pipe in mouth, unmoved by their strange environment. Down by the sea a man is riding a horse through the waves; and in a trough of the downs where some fences have been put up, an officer is training a cob.

The bay is alive with ships, and the air with the music of

the French aeroplanes, as they come buzzing overhead with the purr of a great beetle and the wings of a buzzard. One, two, three, four—I can count them as they come; one afar off and high in the heavens, another circling low in narrowing orbits, till it comes like some feline thing to rest upon the sword.

And then away they go again, filling the air with their deep vibration, one after another, into the world that lies beyond Hortiach and the British entrenchments, until they are lost to sight and sound.

After they have gone one stays on to look with a complete contentment at the world as it passes through the phases of approaching night. For there is nothing so wonderful as this daily event in all the handiworks of man.

The winds die down, as if in homage to the retreating sun; the sea is calm and still. Upon its surface lie the battleships, as creatures that would be at peace. Upon the north, there by the soft green hills, spreads the ancient city, with the light upon its walls and towers, so far off that no murmur from it reaches to this place of quiet. Facing me, afar in the west, there is a long chain of mountains transfigured in the gold of the sunset, and capped by great puffs of cloud that are rimmed and encircled by fire. Away there upon those golden summits, the Bulgar hosts await the onset of the allied armies; and now and then, if you listen closely, you will hear

the concussion of the bickering guns—blup, blup . . .

A little further towards the south the great chain of golden mountains approaches the sea, and rising to a height of close upon 10,000 feet, dazzles the imagination of men as the Thessalian Olympus. Here the fires of the sunset reach only in washes of rose, and the mighty brow of Jove flushes with a virginal beauty. From instant to instant the scene changes, for the great cosmic processes know no pause in the divine harmony of their action.

Fans and searchlights of flame break out through the assembled clouds, reaching far up into the lucent sky, descending in glory upon the sea. A battleship caught in them is transformed from darkness and iron into a mist of gold. And then, little by little, the shadows of approaching night enfold the world. The fires pale, the crescent moon rides high in the heavens, a star shines forth. And it is now that the air is once more thrilled by a murmur that seems to come from afar. One turns to discover its origin, and there beyond the peak of Hortiach, in the paling sky, is a Farman homing like a great bird a-wing. It is so high and so remote that I wonder how it will descend; but the sound of its music increases, it grows larger to the vision, it makes wide, sweeping circles, descending from plane to plane; the air is filled with its vibration; I can faintly

distinguish the form of the pilot; and in the last gleam of the sunset I can see, like the under-plumage of a bird, the concentric circles that are the badge of the French aviators.

The plane is flying now over the tops of the houses and circling for its place of descent; it glides over the grassy meadows, almost brushing them, as it were, with its wings; it touches earth with a faint concussion, and then at last it comes to a pause, though its propeller continues, as with a grumble of protest, to work for some moments longer.

You feel that it is not a machine, but a live thing; it looks in the far sky like a bird to the life; and in its last moments, as it finally comes to earth, it is for all the world like an eagle returning with its prey.

It is otherwise when you climb into this creature and fly. It is, let us say, a grey morning, an hour before sunrise. The city is asleep. Upon the long sea-front, where the traffic roars all day, there is nothing moving but a solitary motor-van, which has been out all night upon some business of war. Down by the hangars, where the road turns off, the acacias are in bloom, and the still air is heavy with their perfume. A nigger from Lake Tchad stands like a column at the gates, his bayonet fixed, his white teeth shining, clad in the uniform of France. He speaks French a good deal

better than the average Englishman.

"Lieutenant M—— will be here in five minutes."

As I look about me, there is the green sward of yesterday; in those vast sheds the aeroplanes are at rest, save one, which a number of men are bringing forward into the open. In an adjoining canteen some hot coffee is being poured out into cups.

Lieutenant M—— appears, his blue eyes shining brightly, his manner alert and distinguished, his costume rather like that of an Eskimo or a baby. In a moment we have climbed into the car, the propeller has begun to revolve, the plane is pushed forward, the rubber wheels bump lightly on the grass, and then by some magic we are in the air. I can see that we are ascending, but slowly, as one moves up-stream; the sound of the propeller fills one's ears; one's eyes are fixed upon the receding earth. At one's feet there is a celluloid pane through which one can look, and below this is the neat receptacle for bombs, which you can drop with a touch of the pedal. A wind blows hard against one, even on this still somnolent morning. And then everything begins to lose its natural appearance, and the world stands out in a new perspective. The bell-tents of the soldiery, in each of which there are sixteen men, look like the icing on the edge of a wedding-cake; the long lines of cavalry horses and mules look like the needles in a musical-box; the Serbian army is displayed like

a child's toy; a Turkish village, with its grey fortified tower and tall minaret, looks like a pretty incident in a large picture; the straight white military roads are like bits of ribbon arranged across the green chequer of the earth.

Leaving the sea, we ascend towards Hortiach, whose summit is 4000 feet high; the mountain-sides rise up to meet us; we pass over them; the world becomes visible; every detail of it is spread at our feet. We can see the little smoke of the morning fires, the connecting roads. . . . We are on a level with the summit of Hortiach; . . . we ascend above it; there is a streak of yellow sunrise; the plane moves with a solid, easy composure. It becomes a little cold.

And now we are over the divide—the perimeter of hills that shelters Salonica, the Torres Vedras of Macedonia. The whole of Lake Langaza is become visible. Below us there is the velvet green of corn-fields, the rougher fringe of the moors; and the British trenches look like the workings of white ants. There is the little strip of the Via Ignatia, the old road that linked the city of Constantine with Rome.

We are above the lake now, its olive-green luminous with the reflection of the rising sun. At one end there is a cluster of boats under an old weather-beaten tower; at another, safe from intrusion, a flock of white birds, that are seemingly still asleep.

Beyond the lake rise the outer Balkans—the outposts of

the Allied armies. Over there the guns bicker, the cavalry scout; there is the growling that precedes attack. Behind that grey veil there is hidden the glamour of the Coming Event.

We turn a little aside, and, leaving the lake, fly up the long valley, over the peak that is called Gibraltar. The trenches are like a tapestry at our feet, and we can see their purpose and plan. The sides of the water-courses are white with an inner lining of tents. A village deploys, the totality of its ancient life exposed to our gaze. We see it in the aggregate, and forget that in each homestead there are human creatures, whose joys and sorrows are similar to our own. I can understand now the indifference with which men fling bombs upon a crowded city, as impartial as Fate. Everything, it would seem, is a matter of perspective. Most of us would walk (without a pang) over a colony of ants, its ordered life and tense activities.

We recross the axis of the hills, and face the marshes of the Vardar. Before us gleams in its wide circuit the Bay of Salonica, with Olympus grey and cold beyond. I can see the brown fans of the Vardar mud, the deeper blue of the sea near the quays, where the battle-ships anchor. Away there on our right spread the French encampments, line upon line in serried masses.

Here below us, visible through the celluloid pane, is the whole of Salonica, within its old grey

walls, like sheep in a pen. But we move swiftly, and a moment later the harbour lies below us: the sailing boats like little butterflies under glass; the battleships like canoes; and as the out-going steamers move upon their way we can see how they skirt the visible limits of the Vardar mud. You don't realise that as a passenger. Beside the cruisers the submarines nestle, like the small fish that travel with the shark.

And then we begin to descend—the revolutions become slower, the sound of the propeller abates; we make giddy circles descending; the world goes round; we ease down; and once more the comfortable earth is very near. Familiar objects assume their natural proportions. The aeroplane is very low now, and racing, like a bird about to alight, over the fields; and here for almost the first time one has the impression of speed. The rest of it has been like sitting in a chair.

We touch earth with the lightest of contacts; the little wheels run along the grass; the men at the Aerodrome run forward and guide the plane to its place of rest. We have travelled at a moderate speed of some eighty kilometres an hour, and in fifty minutes have seen three armies in position. Eighteen hours on horseback showed me but a fraction of this.

I am back in time to catch the first tram as it leaves its shed. From this superb movement I am reduced once more to commonplace things: the jolting tram, the foot-passengers on the pavements.

When flying is made safe it will surpass all other motion; but it will make for the Lucretian view. One will trace the causes of things; the world will become a map rather than a picture; the little homely incidents will be lost; the wooded glen with its stream purling through it, the haunted pool, the mountain withdrawn in its dread majesty,—these will become but topographical incidents. The beautiful bay, with its smiles and its sunlit waters flecked with ships, will be no more than a ground-plan; the city, with its monuments, its human souls, its homes, its griefs, joys, aspirations, and despair, will seem to one in the air but a cluster of houses and streets, and scarcely discernible pinnacles. Many of the things we love and strive after will become insignificant and unsatisfying; there will be a reason for everything. Will that homestead with its carefully-tended garden be anything to you when you have seen it as scarcely more than a pin-point in a hive? that cherished acre anything but trivial when you have seen a million such spread, the one indistinguishable from the other, under your momentary gaze? that battleship, with its great guns, anything but a trivial toy invented by the child—Man?

But there will be compensations. The world will become clearer, and the spirit will soar, as did the soul of Lucretius, into the outposts of space, into new spheres of imagination and

awe. A new poetry will arise, and the fabric of thought will be changed. And something of this we shall owe, amidst the general wreckage, to the stimulus of the Great War.

ENTRENCHED POSITIONS.

At Salonica one is concerned with the comedy of life. It is a place of politics, of subtle issues, of under-currents and passionate rivalries, and of rumours and tales that swell like the clouds into illimitable space, for the most part to vanish and fade away into nothingness. But out upon the green hills that encircle the city one is in another world. And it was my fortune to see something of this world upon more than one occasion.

The episode began outside the old Turkish Consulate: a villa amidst pine-trees and flowers on the edge of the sea. The pansies and roses which graced its entrance, and its name over the lintel, the Villa Ida, were a relic of its late occupants. The British sentry at the gate, standing stiffly erect with his bayonet fixed, was more in harmony with the uses to which it was now being put; for it was the Headquarters of the British Army under General Sir Bryan Mahon.

It continued, upon a journey that was to carry us far afield from the sights and scenes of the city, into the open countryside, where our people were assembled for war. But at first we motored slowly through the city over its cobbled streets,—the General saluted at every turn by Englishmen, French-

men, Greeks, and Serbians,—through the dimness of the Turkish Bazaar, and the scenes of a vanished supremacy. A little while and we were out upon the white Seres road that takes its way over the Greek hills, in the company of hundreds of great Argentine mules, of transport carts, motor-lorries, guns, and infantry and cavalry on the march.

How different were these things, these hills and encampments, these men astir upon the business of war, from the pleasant town with its quays and ships, its pretty women, its loafers, intriguers, and idlers, its timid populace! Here was another world.

Then the motor drew up by the roadside, and the General gave his chauffeur instructions to meet him four hours later at the village of K—. We walked down to a cluster of tents, and a groom came forward.

"I will ride the black to-day, Smith," said the General. "And saddle the chestnut as well."

"Yess-sir," said the smart groom turned soldier, saluting; and presently, as we waited by the tents and the banks of a little stream that came purling through the green valley, the black and the chestnut were brought up, and we rode away. We were

a party of seven, including an Aide-de-camp, jovial and large of figure, whose function it was to take a rosy view of life, and to spread contentment about him wherever he went. Twenty years before I had met a kinsman of his with the same gift. For the rest we had an escort of four, one of whom bore the pennon of the Army Commander.

Thus we rode over the green hills, leaving the Seres road behind us, and meeting all sorts and conditions of men in khaki. Here a Highlander on guard over an ammunition store that lay buried deep under the turf; there a train of mules, wilful, squealing, obstructive; Canadians, Australians, Irishmen, some asleep by the pathway in the oblivion of fatigue, others climbing the long telegraph-poles and linking up the wire as it spanned the blue cloud-capped sky above the green margin of the hills; field batteries rumbling to their places. The big men on the big horses flung out each an arm sharply to attention, and saluted like an image as the General passed. Fresh of hue, superb of figure, martial of countenance, and in the very prime of life, these men touched one's pride.

"With such men we should win battles," I ventured; and the General, looking at them with a critical affection, said, "Ah! yes; they are fine fellows."

Next we came to an Indian Transport Corps, and the men with the faces of those you will see on the Pindi-Kashmir

road, at the villages where the tongas halt, sat their horses well and saluted as we rode by. But a year ago their brethren had clustered round me, proud of having sent their sons and brothers to the Great War, and all eager to know if it was really true that the German Emperor had become Moslem, so widely and well does a lie travel until it is killed.

A little further and we came to the summit of a hill where a new-made trench wound with its white sand-bags like a particularly tortuous snake over the skyline towards the hollow on the farther side.

And from here we looked upon a scene that is intimately concerned with the history of this war.

For at our feet there lay the wide Vale of Langaza, smooth as the floor of the sea; with villages and white minarets, and fields of buttercups that lay like a patchwork of gold upon the grass, and fir plantations, and here and there the tumulus—as over in Ireland—of some dead personage of ancient days. The valley bore down upon the Lake of Langaza, blue and sleepy in the haze of this summer day, and beyond it rose the Krusha Balkans and the Beshik Dag, from three to four thousand feet in height; and yet again, in the distance, the Belashitza, hard by Doiran and the line towards Rabrovo, where the 10th Division under General Mahon, the men of Connaught and Munster and the Dublin Fusiliers, held the Bulgar armies at bay from the 5th to the 9th December,

—an act of war that their brethren of Irish blood will not wish to forget.

The General was silent, after the manner of his kind, about his own part in the fighting of those three or four eventful days, when the French, hard pressed in their retreat along the Vardar line, were hastening down through the Demir Kapu defile to the junction of their right wing with the British forces; but he looked quietly for a moment or two in that direction, and, pointing his hunting-crop towards a big blue mountain transfigured afar off in the sun-haze, said—

“D’you see those two mules up there against the skyline and the high mountain there beyond? Well, that’s the Bulgarian frontier.”

Upon those high hills, the Krusha Balkans and the Beshik Dag, between which to its descent upon the farther side across the Struma river there winds the Seres road, our advanced cavalry and guns were stationed; and each morning our horsemen bickered with the German patrols. But no trace of all this was visible from here. There was only the peaceful valley sleeping at our feet and the cloud shadows as they wandered over the everlasting hills.

But about us and near at hand as we descended towards the intervening vale were the British trenches, and dark caves in the hills for men to shelter in from gun fire, and a small enclosure that a little way off might seem no more

than a shepherd’s camp on the hillside, and this was the headquarters of a brigadier. It was, for all that science has added to the business of war, a return to the primitive life.

We continued to descend, and in the green valleys where there were pools there were men, white and naked, bathing and drying themselves in the lustre of the sun. So it was when the world was young and the gods lived upon the mountain-sides.

Then the horses, sweating from the heat and the stiff ascent, stopped as of right by the stream’s edge, where some dead Turk had carved a marble trough by a fountain, and they drank with a profound contentment, their necks strained forward, their lips to the music of the running stream. It was such a group as you will see in many a picture: the horses drinking, the men dismounted beside them, the flowing stream, and from a lance-head the General’s pennon fluttering in the breeze.

“All this water,” said he, pulling out a vast aluminium cigarette-case, “goes to waste. And just look at that valley there—what a place we could make of it!”

I suppose that in every Irishman’s heart there resides this instinct for the land.

When we came to the level valley, we mounted again, by a line of trenches that lay flat upon its green surface, and cantered over the soft turf, by the cruel lines of barbed wire, over fields of

blood-red poppies and acres of daisies, by purple thistles and fields of buttercups, the big chestnut swinging over the yielding turf with the clean stride of the high-caste horse.

A little way ahead of me rode the General, easy in his saddle, as a man is easy in his home; with the seat of the hunting-man—the man from Galway. His hair was a little grizzled about the ears, his figure clean-built and slim; his skin was tanned to a dark brown, and the clean line of his jaw showed the man of action. It seemed to me then that there was very little about a horse that he didn't know, and that he looked upon life through the plain, direct gaze of a soldier who knew the world. His talk, as we rode, was of India and Africa, and of the sport and service that carry men of our race from quiet countrysides to the uttermost parts of the earth. And yet, since we all love the countryside, he turned every now and then to dwell upon the wild flowers by the wayside, and the shadows of the clouds upon the hills.

Leaving the valley now and the edge of Lake Langaza, we turned back to the upland moors, and were once more behind the scenes of a modern entrenchment, amidst the hospitals and the first-aid stations, the bomb-proof shelters and the business of supply. The sultry noon, which had flecked our horses with foam, gave way to a breeze from the sea, and upon these high moors

the air was delicious, and full of sustenance. The men as they marched past us looked the very image of health, with their tanned faces and blue eyes, and the twang of their speech was the twang of many an English county—Oxford, Buckingham, Wilts.

Once, before leaving the crest of the hill, we turned to look back, and there was a picture apt for the painter. A green knoll where sheep were browsing; a herd of tasselled goats reclining in the shelter of the scented shrubs; a shepherd-lad piping to the morning; a patch of corn with the wind blowing over it; and in the midst of all, the climbing road made by the British Pioneers, along which the General's escort was passing, its pennon displayed. Far down below lay the steely blue of Lake Langaza, half asleep in the summer haze; beyond it rose the line of the Krusha Balkans, with shadow and sunlight ever changing on their surface; while above them the cloud castles soared high into the heavens; and afar off lay the Bulgar outposts, invisible in the sun-mists on the horizon.

It was a scene so peaceful and heavy-lidded with repose, so silent, so motionless, save for a hawk winging his flight in circles overhead, that one might have fallen asleep looking at it, and never dreamt that here was a scene of impending war, which held within its compass armies that were only waiting their summons to battle.

That great summons has since gone forth: the guns have begun to rumble over the white roads, the infantry to march, and the great issue is joined. The moment for action is come.

But upon that summer day these things seemed but an illusion of the spirit, and the realities of war little more than the phantasms of a dream.

And then—a year or two later, when the war is over, and the great battles have been fought and won, and men have died, and peace is once more upon the land, there will remain here, to mark this conflict of the world, little more than these white ribbons of road along which the slow people of the countryside will toil with a greater ease; and here and there an earthwork will survive, to tell that there were gathered upon these hills, as of old before Ascalon and Antioch, the allied hosts of England and France.

Passing rapidly down the seaward slopes, through a smiling valley of vineyards and fruit-trees, interspersed with corn, we reached the village of K—, with its tall church-tower, its red-roofed houses, its plots of garden and field, and left our

sweating horses for the car. The highway, which was also the main street of the village, was so narrow here that we had to wait till the motor-lorries and the mules that were already engaged upon it had come through, and the telephone operator in his tent by the wayside had sent word of our passing to the farther end. We were not long in transit, but just long enough to catch a glimpse of the tranquil life of the village, of the grocer's shop, the Post Office, the little inner courtyards bright with wistarias and white Banksia roses, the pots of carnations, and the faces of women and children at the windows. They told me once more that war is but an incident, and that the peaceful life of the countryside is the one permanent thing that persists through all vicissitudes.

A few moments more, and we were back upon the cobbles and in the midst of the shadowy bazaar and the people by the quays; and here was the sea, swelling by the walls like a giant at play, tossing the sailing barks and the serried ships; and afar off through the forest of masts and the lace-work of the rigging, remote and unearthly, rose the front of Jove, the Thessalian Olympus.

ODYSSEUS.

THE FUTURE OF IRELAND.

BY THE PROVOST OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

WHEN this prospect is set before us as a problem to be solved, we may easily separate the answers that will be given into two classes—one, those of the party politicians, who are only thinking how far Ireland can be utilised in the struggles for power of Tories and Radicals (to use the simplest labels); the other, those of men who despise these party quarrels, and are thinking of the future safety and prosperity of their country. I take care not to call them patriots, a term which has now acquired in Ireland an evil reputation, being commonly applied to convicted felons. What I have to say in this paper will, therefore, naturally follow this division of the subject—viz., the immediate prospects of a settlement which will keep Ireland quiet (I will not say contented), and the further consideration of the permanent difficulties which are likely to hinder Irish peace and prosperity either for a time or for the future, as far as we can foresee it. My only reason for setting down in print what I think is that I am constantly being asked for my opinion, and above all, the fact that I belong to no party, and hence may be expected to have an unbiassed judgment. But for that reason my opinion carries no weight whatever in the counsels of the nation. Almost every male you meet in Ireland

is a party man, who will not tolerate any criticism of his political friends, even though they be manifest scoundrels. Nor will he admit that any approach to a settlement is possible, except by accepting his own views. Thus I have old Tories coming to me and asking me to write to 'The Times' and say that Home Rule is stone-dead, because the first attempt at an amending Bill has broken down; on the other side, I hear young enthusiasts scouting John Redmond and Home Rule, even as a stepping-stone to the liberation of Ireland. These are the people who promoted the Rebellion in Dublin, justified by the Dillon-Ginnell faction in the very House of Commons, where such conduct received no castigation but the mild rebuke of the Speaker. The tameness of the House of Commons would matter little but for the effect it had in Ireland.

In the face of these wild contrasts, let us see what would be the reasonable course to take in order to promote a proximate settlement.

In spite of the Tories who deliberately shut their eyes to the accomplished fact, an Act of Parliament *is* on the Statute Book granting Home Rule to Ireland. But there must also be an amending Bill, at which the "Six Counties" arrange-

ment aimed. That solution is, I trust, so generally repudiated that it will not be revived. But if so, what other solution is to be proposed? For my own part, though I may be incompetent to frame such a solution, I do feel competent to point out how, and by whom, it should be framed.

There never was a clearer case for any first step than for the appointment of a Committee by the Government of experienced Irishmen to frame the heads of an amending Bill. It should be summoned by the Chief Secretary on the part of the Government, and should consist partly of the extreme men of all parties, not excluding either fossil Tories or blood-stained Sinn Feiners. It should also include some moderate men, not bound up with any party, but cognisant of them all, and still more, of the needs of Ireland. I still have some faint hopes that such a Committee might come to some practical conclusions, and lead the House of Commons into the paths of common-sense. For of this I am far more confident, that unless a settlement is reached in this way, we shall not reach it without some far wider legislation than mere Home Rule, as now put before us.

This should be the Chief Secretary's first duty, instead of being led about the West of Ireland by his subordinates—an evil precedent set by his criminal predecessor. For there are moments when idle indifference is one of the worst of crimes. But even if Parliament were sitting, the Chief

Secretary's first duty is to work in and for Ireland, not to get up in the House of Commons to answer silly or vicious questions. Such stuff should not occupy the House more than once a month, when those who know what it is worth, and the objects for which it is produced, could take a holiday. For the parading of Irish questions in the House of Commons, and in the daily press, is one of the worst obstacles to any reasonable agreement.

I have, of course, my convictions regarding some provisions which ought, or ought not, to appear in the amending Bill; but these will better be reserved for the consideration of the Committee which should sit in private, and only publish the results obtained. It is our long and consistent experience that public inquiries in Ireland are far more frequented by those who wish to exhibit themselves in the daily press than by those who desire to do some good to their country. I will here only repeat my conviction, that if some such Committee is unable to find a solution in an amending Bill, it is as certain as anything can be about Ireland, that the House of Commons will not find it without some new outbreak, or a completely new departure in statesmanship.

Why should such a new departure be thought necessary? Because of the peculiar social and religious conditions into which the country has drifted, partly by the neglect

of the British Government, partly by the active propaganda carried on throughout the country, which has not only leavened the masses of the people, but has conquered the influence of their religion, and therefore of the only moral restraint which semi-civilised people are likely to respect. Let us first, therefore, consider the social forces in Ireland which make any reasonable settlement difficult.

There have been always in Ireland, in every political agitation for the last 200 years, some literary men who by songs, quasi-philosophical essays, and distorted histories have more or less successfully inflamed Irish feeling against England. That propaganda has been of recent years fortified by the discovery of some of the agitators, that the primary and secondary schools were the proper ground in which to sow their tares. It was a declared part of the policy of Pearce and other leaders of open rebellion, that it is through the schools that the nation must be trained to assert its political separation from England. "Give me a nation's songs," said a celebrated Scot, "and I care not who makes their laws." A friend sent me the other day the blue covering leaf of a copy-book used in one of the Christian Brothers' schools near Dublin. There was printed on the inside of the cover a rebel song glorifying the recently executed felons. It had been rudely printed on after the book had been sewed together,

probably after it had left the shop. It was in the possession of a golf caddy, who attended that school. Another friend reported to me that on visiting a National (R.C.) school in the South, and complimenting master and pupils upon their intelligent answers, he asked the children to sing "God save the King." They were dumb, and looked to their master for a vindication. He promptly told his visitor that he did not allow his boys to sing *party tunes*. Need any man of common-sense ask what the teaching of Irish history in such schools is certain to be.

The belief that a large proportion of the R.C. National schoolmasters are disloyal in this plain sense is so universal that no official denial of it carries any weight. The Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, who control the primary schools maintained by the State, wrote to me lately an official letter, asking for the evidence of my statement that the late rebellion had been a schoolmasters' rebellion. Of course I refused to supply them with this information, of which they could easily collect ten times as much as I have, most of it evidence of tone, rather than of overt acts. But both they and I would be hampered by the following consideration. Much of the clearest evidence is furnished by local people under the honourable understanding that their names are not to be mentioned. They very reasonably dread a loss of their situation, or other persecution,

if discovered to be informers. There is, moreover, another class of witness not unfrequent in Ireland—a man who will speak quite unreservedly on such questions in private society, but if cited in public will get up boldly and declare that he never said such things at all; and then he will comment to his friends upon the treachery with which he had been treated, in having his private opinions made public, and Irish society would certainly sympathise with him in this complaint.

I tell these things, because they are not known or appreciated in England, and because I am convinced that this disloyalty of many R.C. schools, both primary and secondary, is the deepest reason why the new generation in Ireland is beginning to despise John Redmond and his attempts at a constitutional settlement. They demand complete independence for Ireland, even to the degree of siding with England's enemies in war. This is of course absurd, even to the maddest of English politicians, but how is it to be avoided without the employment of a permanent army of occupation? Until you can make the R.C. schools loyal, the state of opinion in Ireland will go from bad to worse.

I am told that both school-

masters and ushers are a discontented class, and discontented with just reason. The most obvious remedy must be to remove their causes of complaint. I know of two, but there may be more. The first is that their salaries, especially after long service, are inadequate. The second, and much the more serious, is that they have no fixity of tenure.¹ But how can such tenure possibly be granted to a body, some of whom have already declared themselves, many more of whom are secretly, the enemies of England?

The obvious answer seems to be that the duty of preventing this danger devolves naturally on the managers of the schools. To them is committed the appointment, and also the dismissal at three months' notice. Why cannot these responsible people save us from the corruption of the school children—not by dismissing the master without public inquiry, but by exacting periodical evidence of his at least passive loyalty? They could, of course, but they do not, for very grave reasons, which I feel it my duty to set forth, as every body knows them, but few will undertake to declare them. The great majority of the managers of the National schools in the South and West, and many in Ulster, are R.C. priests. A considerable number

¹ The lay teachers in secondary R.C. schools have miserable salaries and no fixity of tenure or pensions at all. The primary schoolmasters have pensions provided they are not dismissed by their managers. They have an appeal to the Commissioners of Education, who can only refuse to appoint a successor to a man unjustly dismissed and so bring about a deadlock, which leaves the dismissed man helpless.

of the younger ones are infected with Sinn Fein teaching. But a far larger number are afraid of the Sinn Feiners, and therefore afraid to take any steps against disloyalty, while in many districts they would gain popularity by setting their faces against a loyal teacher. They listen to reports against him, they say he was unpopular, and therefore inefficient, and therefore they gave him notice to quit. Hence the loyal schoolmaster is kept in constant fear of being dismissed, and so reduced to penury. This is the story I have heard over and over again under the condition of secrecy regarding the name, and it is one of the many things which everybody says he knows but nobody will undertake to prove. Is it right, therefore, that such things should not be mentioned? Before a Governing Board, of course, hearsay evidence is not admissible. Before the bar of history we must admit it. If it be absurd, and contrary to the reason of the thing, or to other proved facts, it will receive no credence from steady people. If it can be corroborated by further hearsay evidence, making up a great body of consistent rumour, it cannot be without some weight.

I proceed to discuss the present position of the Church of Rome as a power making for good morals and social order, which has often shown its power to promote these great objects. It has done so owing to the courage and de-

votion of its prelates and its priests, who faced persecution, and even death, in defence of honesty, justice, and mercy. In the recent rebellion, when there was ample opportunity of saving life and property and of asserting the dignity of religion, I cannot find that the Church of Rome in Ireland did anything but sit down in darkness and in silence, except when their priests made some demonstration of sympathy with the rebels. The daily press did not report a single sermon preached in any R.C. church or chapel in Dublin, or indeed in Ireland, censuring looting, arson, and murder. The R.C. pulpits in Dublin were silent; the Archbishop issued no pastoral. We Protestants only heard of two actions on the part of R.C. priests, both of which I believe, but neither of which I can verify. At the very opening of the rebellion, when the Post Office was seized and harmless men were being shot in the street, a priest issued from the neighbouring pro-Cathedral, and stood up in loud protest against the rebellion. He was presently shot dead, and with him, it was said, a brave nun. In another parish, the young men who were going to rise went beforehand to confess to their priest and obtain the sanction of the Church. The priest did his best to dissuade them from their purpose, but in the end was reported to have given them his blessing in some form. The interpretation commonly added,

that he absolved them from the crimes they were going to commit, I repudiate as incredible. But it was said freely enough. The public and ostentatious Requiem Masses celebrated for the executed felons tell the same tale.

These acts and commonly believed reports confirm the view which has long since been expressed by serious lay Catholics. The priests are no longer leading their people; they are only watching the trend of public opinion among the masses, and either putting themselves forward as leaders or carefully avoiding to stem the rising tide.

In a recent pastoral Cardinal Logue laid great stress on the importance of *prudence* in his clergy. Prudence and imprudence, as Bishop Butler said long ago, are of the nature of virtue and vice. There are seasons when prudence may even be a high virtue. But there are others where it is akin to very disastrous vices. As I have often said before, safe men may be the ruin of any Church—it is needless to refer to the case of those French clergy in the great Revolution who were afraid to resist the popular feeling, and who in some cases openly joined the party of disorder and bloodshed,—what was their fate? In most cases the scaffold; in a few promotion in the new Republic, but not without lasting contempt. The greater and more influential the R.C. Church is in Ireland, the greater will be her respon-

sibility if she condones crime and looks on calmly at the degradation of her people.

I have not turned aside to say those things against the Church of Rome from any controversial desire to criticise it. For the legitimate work and influence of the Roman Church I have the highest respect, and believe that even yet it might be a powerful agent in the support of law and order amongst its followers. But when I am reviewing the reasons which make the outlook in Ireland so dark, I cannot omit, next to the prostitution of education to disloyal purposes, the lack of honourable independence in the Roman clergy to resist the spread of the crusade of treason. When the once brave and successful guardians of the faith and morals of the masses in Ireland abandon their posts, it is indeed a lamentable prospect.

There is a third cause of apprehension not so deeply seated, not hidden in the hearts of the people, but yet impossible to remove so long as Ireland is governed by English politicians. Recent events give us a signal instance of this mischief. The attempt to condone the conduct of the rebels, and to suppress their worst outrages, is one of the most sinister signs of dishonesty in the present management of affairs. The reader will ask for facts in proof of this accusation. Here they are. The Dillon-Ginnell faction in the House called out for public inquiry into the conduct of the military during the

suppressing of the rebellion. Not only one but two public inquiries were immediately granted them, to go over the same facts twice, publish all the evidence, true and false, in the daily press, and so raise in the Irish masses not only a bitter feeling of revenge against the soldiers, but a false imagination that the rebellion had been crushed with exceptional cruelty. Thus a mischievous falsehood was deliberately sown in the hearts of the people, for if they ever read of any other suppression of an armed revolt by soldiers they would have found a very different story. But if there was blame, was it all on one side? That is what the Government allowed the people to believe. For there are on record the events of the first day of the rebellion, when there were no soldiers on the streets, but single unarmed men on furlough taking their Easter holiday. Many of these, and civilians going their harmless way, were brutally murdered by shots from rebel "sentries" or from the windows of houses occupied by Sinn Feiners. A list of these murders, with their circumstances, is extant. Sir John Maxwell quoted from it three cases. That list was sent to the Government: it was asked for in the House by Mr Walter Guinness. Why did Mr Asquith refuse to publish it? or if he was not satisfied with its accuracy, why did he not order an inquiry into these facts also? When he came to Dublin he was manifestly trying to mini-

mise the whole outrage. He is said (I trust falsely), in the hospitals he visited, to have turned his back on the wounded soldiers, and attended only to the wounded rebels. And yet the lying-in-wait for the Sherwood Foresters, and shooting them from an ambush, was one of the most shocking and lamentable wastes of valuable lives that has occurred in the whole of this crisis.

Such tenderness to disloyalty by suppressing its outrages will never command any respect in Ireland. It will only convey to the people that the Government is afraid to proclaim their crimes, and to justify the very moderate punishment which was inflicted.

This weakness of English, and indeed of quasi-Irish politicians, may seem only transitory, and curable by transferring the Government into better hands. But it has lasted so long, and seems so persistent a feature, that one is driven to the conviction that we must try to govern Ireland by Irishmen and in Ireland. Under what conditions can we imagine such an experiment anything short of chimerical? Under three. First, the military, and still more the naval, control of Ireland's barracks and harbours must be kept in Imperial hands; for there are Sinn Feiners idiotic enough to hail even the advent of Hindenburg and von Tirpitz as an escape from hated English control. Secondly, the vision of a "united Ireland" is contrary to all the teaching of history. There must be pro-

vision for separate provincial management, as well as for such joint action as these sections may voluntarily desire. Thirdly, the arrangement must not be special, peculiar, and exceptional, intended for Ireland only, but must be such as can be applied to Wales, Scotland, or any other small nation which may choose hereafter to join the British Empire.

The constitution of the Dominion of Canada seems to offer some of these features, and might be used as a model. There we find Roman Catholic and Protestant provinces in juxtaposition. There is a French population, allowed (very foolishly) to use its language as an official tongue, which has always nourished a good deal of hatred to England. Yet now all Canada stands by the Empire in a way that puts Ireland to shame. It is, of course, so far removed from Europe that the naval and military occupation of its coasts is not vital, as it is in the case of Ireland. But with several provincial Parliaments, even that danger

would be greatly diminished. By such an arrangement the Ulster question would be settled, for that province would have its own Parliament, quite apart from those of Dublin or of Cork.

It were amusing, but idle, to add further details. For is it likely that a set of men making a precarious livelihood by party politics in the House of Commons will ever consent to the risk of losing their incomes?

I will only say in conclusion that if many of my statements and still more if my inferences are questioned, and even branded by official contradictions as false, I shall content myself by repeating the profoundly philosophical reflection made by some obscure Irishman not long ago. "I tell you, sir, there never was a time when the country was so full of lies, but the worst of it is, more than half of them is true." The lies with which I may be charged will be found to have this curious quality.

J. P. MAHAFFY.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE PURIFYING FLAME OF WAR—VICTORY IN INDUSTRY—"A GOOD DAY'S WORK FOR A GOOD DAY'S PAY"—VICTORY IN THE FIELD—THE PLAIN LOGIC OF EVENTS—THE APPROACHING CRASH—PEACE PLOTS.

THE influence of the war, imperfectly felt for many months, can be disguised no longer. It has attacked at last that remote stronghold of egoism, the Trade Union Congress. Two years ago the Independent Labour Party seemed to have a real existence. It was not then revealed for the thing of ignorance and disloyalty that to-day all the world knows it to be. And the middle-class gentlemen who represent the Trades of England still talked in the esoteric jargon so long familiar to us. They spoke of a capitalists' war as though the great conflict which has torn Europe in twain did not touch them or their interests. With the provincialism of petty politics they denounced "conscription," of which they did not understand the necessity, and which they persisted in believing was the mere whim of an excited press. In brief, the old divorce between thought and speech was evident in all they said. They put the ancient spavined phrases of their clique through their paces, as though they were alive and high-mettled. And of two things only were they perfectly sure—that England was not at war, and that the best thing they could do to preserve their self-esteem was to go out upon strike.

However, it must be admitted that the Trade Union Congress which met at Birmingham made an attempt, not wholly successful, to deal with facts. It put away from it grudgingly the foolish cult of words, so dear to the heart of Mr Ramsay Macdonald. It condescended to discuss some subjects at least which bore an intimate relation to life. Better still, its members gave practical proof that the news of the war had not only reached them, but had reshaped some of their opinions. They have reconsidered the estimate which formerly they held of the German, who is no longer in their eyes a man and a brother. That wise and independent man, Mr Sexton, has gone so far as to deplore the use of the word "comrade," as indeed he might, which he asserts is nothing more than another name for charlatan. About the war the members of the Congress are indisputably unanimous. They are determined that the Allies shall win, and they will stick at nothing, or at hardly anything, to make our victory certain. All these things are of good omen for the future, and they show that the purifying flame of war is destroying not a few superstitions.

For the duration of the war,

then, we may depend upon the trade unions to do their best for the common cause. They, who have hitherto lived in a world apart, enjoying special privileges and legally disobedient to the general laws, have brought themselves into line with the other classes of the community. The worst of it is that Mr Gosling and his colleagues, in shaping their course aright, cannot refrain from striking the note of self-satisfied provincialism. They cannot get out of their minds "the super-importance of labour." They would be more happily inspired if they left out the challenging prefix. In the great war which we are waging against the Central Powers no class is "super-important." Between labour and leadership there should be no rivalry, because the one is useless without the other. Without efficient leadership in the field our soldiers would wander aimlessly to their death, like a flock of sheep going to the slaughter. Without the leadership of skill and inventiveness the industry of the working men in our munition-works would be unavailing. This is not the moment to weigh in the balance numbers against brains. We want all the numbers and all the brains that we can get, and as numbers and brains are fighting on the same side, the trade unions would be wise to suspend their sectarian pride, and to recognise cheerfully that the only rivalry that is possible to-day is not the rivalry of class but the rivalry of honourable men, who have sworn, each in his

own sphere, that they will do their utmost to defeat the Germans.

Again, Mr Gosling insists overmuch upon the sacrifices which he and his colleagues have made. "Labour," he says, "has been the personification of real patriotism." If this be true, labour is not singular in its devotion. And again we are told that "trade union practices, built up and endowed by generations of trade unionists, have been given over as willingly as thousands had given their lives, because it was deemed essential for national defence." This, we fear, is a plain overstatement. We have heard of strikes not a few since the war began; we have heard of open disloyalty spoken and cheered in industrial centres. And neither strikes nor disloyalties are essential for the defence of the Empire. We would prefer that there should be just now no competition in usefulness, but if competition there must be, we have a right to demand the truth and nothing but the truth. Nor have the members of the trade unions, in surrendering their practices, done any more than the other classes which make up the nation. Nowhere does the old life go on as it went before the war. If Mr Gosling would take the trouble to visit Oxford and Cambridge, he would see that "practices built up and endowed" by twenty generations more than the trade unions may boast, have been surrendered without a murmur. The scholarship, which was once our

boast and our solace, has been abandoned cheerfully. The colleges, once the abodes of learning, are now proudly given up to the training of officers, and it is not thought necessary for the masters and the fellows to proclaim upon the house-tops the "super-importance" of the O.T.C., or to brag that they personify real patriotism. Sacrifices should be made ungrudgingly. They are all the better if they are made in silence also.

Mr Gosling, not content with urging the super-importance of his friends, compares them with others, vastly to their advantage. "Contrast the conduct of the workers," he says, "... with the conduct of the ship-owners, food exploiters, war contractors, and other profiteers who had scrupled at nothing so long as it secured their enrichment." We are quite willing to make the contrast, and we are not sure that the workers emerge creditably from it. There are no words too strong for the condemnation of profiteers. The rascals who will make money from the difficulties and dangers in which their country is involved deserve no pity and no consideration. But are the workers blameless? Have they claimed no share of the profits which have been lying about for greedy hands to pick up? The National Free Labour Association, composed of the same class as makes up the trade unions, does not think so highly of Mr Gosling and his friends as these gentlemen think of themselves. The re-

port of this association, which cannot be charged with "capitalism," points out that since the beginning of the war trade union workers have doubled their wages. The rich, it confesses, are being taxed as they have never been taxed before, and a great part of the money is finding its way into the pockets of the munition workers. "The nation is divided," says the report, "into two classes—those to whom the war has brought unbounded prosperity, in which category come the unconscionable profiteer and the overpaid munition worker, and those to whom it has brought only added burdens." It would be as well if the members of the trade unions pondered these words when they are inclined to boast of their sacrifices. They, at any rate, have not held their tongues when the price of food has gone up. Though they may have surrendered many ancient practices, they have still clung to the privilege of striking, and, knowing themselves important, have got what they want. It is not their business, therefore, to sneer at "profiteers" when they know that their pockets are far more heavily weighted than they were two years ago.

The truth is that the trade unions, an *imperium in imperio*, refuse to acknowledge their solidarity with the nation. Whatever they do, they do with an air, as who should say, see what valiant, unselfish fellows we are! So long as they want nothing, they are indifferent to the stress and discomfort of others. If they

were able to take a broader view, they might sympathise with the sorrows of free labour; they might remember the distress which the war has brought to the professional classes, who utter no word of complaint. But they have eyes and ears only for themselves and their own interests, and thus guilty of sectarianism, they cannot exert, and do not deserve to exert, the proper weight of their influence upon the country. We shall believe in their intelligence and sincerity more easily when they show themselves capable of thinking about others, when some poor glimmer of their own fallibility reaches their unilluminated brains.

Meanwhile they have made one discovery, which they would have made years ago if they had had any clear understanding of politics. They have discovered that the doctrine of free imports is not unassailable. For many years they have protected their industry with a kind of ferocity; they have not protected the product of their industry. And now the war, which has taught them many things, has taught them this also, that to buy in the cheapest market and to sell in the dearest is not the one and only end of human endeavour. They are bent only merely upon their own advancement—that they are never tired of telling us—and they have pretended to believe, in contempt of the evidence, that they have thriven best under the system of *laissez faire*. They believe it no longer. They solemnly

adopted a resolution “calling for the restriction of the importation of cheap manufactured goods produced abroad under worse labour conditions than those at home.” In this resolution, it will be seen, there is still no thought of the country. The trade unionists cannot look beyond their own profit. It is the “worse labour conditions” that convince them. They say nothing about the immoral influence of free trade, the idleness and incompetence which it encourages at home, the ignominy of depending upon the labour of others for our daily food. In brief, they cannot take a large and statesmanlike view, and we have no guarantee that they would not welcome the importation of German goods if only they were sure that the workmen in Germany lived under the same conditions as they live themselves.

However, it is something that they have escaped from the spider’s web of dogma upon any pretext whatever. It is something also that they profess themselves “tired of war in the industrial field.” We are all tired of that unprofitable warfare, but it takes goodwill upon both sides to make a lasting peace. That goodwill the trade unionists are unwilling to bring into the bargain. For many years they have lived upon rhetoric. The loose, noisy statements of their leaders have been their meat and their drink. Indeed, they have chosen their leaders generally, not for any gift of wisdom or administration, but rather for a trick of glib elo-

quence. And from their leaders they have learned to distrust all employers. If the Government be their employer, the distrust is no less, and not even in their last pronouncements do they show any eagerness to escape from the bondage of the blind hostility. But escape they must, if any good is to be done, for it is impossible to create a firm friendship with men who are determined, in adversity or in prosperity, to nurse an obstinate, unreasoning prejudice.

And besides this unreasoning prejudice, there is one other sentiment of which the trade unionists must rid themselves if there is to be peace between them and the employers—the sentiment of limited output. They clamour that all the pre-war conditions shall be restored after the war, and restored they will be in accord with the Government's solemn undertaking. They clamour also that the high rate of wages which now prevails shall continue when the terms of peace are signed. But if the workers insist once more upon limiting their output, upon measuring their speed and energy by the speed and energy not of the most but of the least efficient, there will instantly be trouble. A good day's pay for a good day's work is an excellent motto. But if the pay is to be good, the work should not be withheld merely to satisfy a superstition, and the trade unionists must understand that it is their duty to give as well as their privilege to take.

Above all, they must return once more to the common life

of the nation. At present they dwell apart, obeying laws made specially for them, and constructing a code of morals which has nothing to do with the general code of the people. They are the spoilt children of the State. The politicians have pampered them, not because they have any faith in their intelligence or superiority, but merely because they are numerous. Their organised vote is so useful, that Mr Asquith and Lord (then plain Mr) Haldane passed the Trade Disputes Bill, which previously they had both denounced, to the great detriment of the State. And the trade unionists, having forced an illegality upon a supine Government, which valued its own convenience far more highly than justice, complacently believe that they are more greatly privileged because they are better than others. So they give themselves the airs of flattered beauties, and actually suppose that the incense offered at their shrine by interested demagogues is the proper reward of a virtue and a wisdom which they alone possess. A vain boast, which recoils upon those that make it. In truth, the injustice of the Trade Disputes Act falls with its full weight upon them. It sets them apart from their fellows in an unenviable isolation, and if they were wisely guided they would themselves demand its repeal. After all, it does not make the game easier to play with honour when you have a couple of aces hidden in your sleeve and your opponent knows it.

When the war is finished a hundred difficult problems will clamour for solution. Millions of men will come back from the trenches and the munition-works into civil life. Work must be found for them which is worth the doing, and which will earn high enough wages to ensure comfort and wellbeing. The question of women, too, must be answered, not in the interest of commercial competition, but in the interest of the race. That women in the war have shown themselves competent to do the work of men is true. But their skill and courage will be all in vain if for the mere sake of money they imperil the safety and the health of future generations. You cannot build a city without men, and in the fierce struggle which lies ahead of us, and which the war will not mitigate, it is men, above all, of which we shall stand in need. If we are to climb the hill of prosperity, therefore, we want all the help that employers and employed can give us; and when next the congress of labour meets we hope that it will forget its old grievances, rid itself of suspicion and hostility, put far away from it the temptations of rhetoric, and settle down without fear to help in shaping the world afresh in accord with new claims and new conditions.

The basis of agreement is not difficult to find. The terms have been sketched on either side with excellent moderation. Mr Neville Chamberlain, in an eloquent speech, pointed out to the delegates assembled at Birmingham the true paths

of friendship and reform. He said that if the workmen and the employers sat down to a discussion, the workmen would have several important demands to make. They would ask "a greater share in the distribution of the wealth which they help to produce, regularity of employment, and improved conditions in the factory and their homes, so that they could preserve their health and spirit and bring up their children in cheerful and healthy surroundings." Nothing can be more clearly reasonable than these demands, and they can easily be satisfied if the workmen treat their employers with loyalty, and if we escape at last from the paralyzing uncertainty of free imports. But the workmen on their side must pay concession with concession, and Mr Chamberlain sketched with equal clarity what he thought the employers might fairly expect in exchange. "The workshops," he said, "were now better equipped with plant and machinery than ever, but they must get the last ounce out of the machinery; and in return for shorter hours and better wages employers had a right to expect that Labour should put forth its utmost efforts. Rates of wages," he continued, "could not be fixed for all time, but if they are to be changed employers ought to have reasonable notice, so that they could regulate prices and contracts accordingly. Employers would also want some security that Labour should not be unreasonably withdrawn."

It is of good omen that this plain statement was received by the Trade Unionists with cheers, and in truth it contains all that need be said on either side. Nor was the suggestion of Mr Gosling in any way inconsistent with it. What he asked for those whom he represented was participation not in the profits, but in the control. A modest demand surely, which erred only in its vagueness. "We workmen," he said, "do not ask to be admitted to any share in what is essentially the employer's own business—that is, in those matters which do not concern us directly." In other words, it is for them to make, not to buy or sell. "We do not seek," thus Mr Gosling went on, "to sit on the board of directors. But in the daily arrangement of the employment, in the atmosphere in which we spend our working lives, in the conditions of remuneration, &c., we feel that we, as workmen, have a right to a voice, even to an equal voice, with the management itself." Here, then, are two excellent beginnings, which, with sympathy and understanding to guide them, should arrive in time at a complete agreement. That there are bad employers as there are bad workmen all will agree. We need not measure our capacities by the lowest standard. Let us think only of the best, and await with confidence and satisfaction the hour when an alliance between employees and employers, working both parties for the good of the country, will give us a victory as decisive and glorious in industry as that which we shall

presently gain, with the help of our Allies, in the field of battle.

For that victory is assured in the field there can no longer be any doubt. The Germans themselves see the vast monument of illusion, which their pride has built up, being demolished before their eyes. The days seem remote, indeed, when they announced "victory upon victory upon victory." The premeditated assault which they delivered against the liberties of Europe, and which was designed to make them universal masters of land and water alike, which was to guarantee them "the freedom of the seas," and to render the Pan-German dream of the *Drang nach Osten* a reality, has failed completely. In East and West they feel the ring of iron tightening round them. They are probably regretting to-day that they ever stirred up a hornet's nest in the Balkans. Their colonies, those ineffectual "places in the sun," have been torn from them one by one. To give Germany her *coup de grâce* may take many months yet. There can no longer be any doubt upon which side the eagle of victory will alight.

Meanwhile the Germans are doing their best to disguise from themselves the plain logic of events. They tell one another, in official despatches, that the offensive on the Somme has failed, that the Russians are incapable of any further attack, that Rumania will shortly be treated with the same brutality as Belgium and Serbia. We may measure

their sense of hopelessness by the foolish exploits, which are to-day their excuse for self-adulation. The return of the *Deutschland* from America sent them wild with joy, though its voyage was no better than a conjuring trick, which could affect neither the commerce nor the fighting power of Germany.

Moreover, what greater proof of weakness could we desire than the practical degradation of the Kaiser from his position as First War Lord? The easy suppression of the man who made the war, and who hitherto has symbolised the war, is an event of no small importance. The Kaiser has for two years been a superstition, a visible if blasphemous link, between Germany and the German God. He has filled the stage as a kind of Napoleon on a small scale. In his speeches and in his policy he has done his best to mimic the great Emperor, who in a moment of folly saved the Kingdom of Prussia from extinction. In the dark days that are to come the Germans will need all the support which superstition can give them, and they will find it suddenly withdrawn. For whatever may be the merits of Hindenburg—and so far he has given small proof of them—the man, perforated by ten thousand nails of gold, silver, and iron, cannot possibly achieve what the Kaiser has achieved. He may brag, if he will, of having driven back to their borders an unarmed horde of Russians; he may brag, if it please him,

of being the victim of a piece of national insanity; but he cannot vaunt, in the accents of the Kaiser, his divine right, his supernatural mission, his privilege of committing the foulest atrocity, and of keeping his soul unstained by sin.

In other words, the Kaiser has for two years represented, as no other man can represent, the clumsy arrogance, the brutal hypocrisy of Prussia. And he is being superseded in the popular imagination by Hindenburg. So long as he held himself supreme he was above and beyond criticism. A well-disciplined mob, which has lost the power of thinking for itself, could not presume to judge the acts and sentiments of one who pretended to be the right hand of a pagan god. Hindenburg, on the other hand, may be tested easily by results. If he wins victories, as is manifestly improbable, well and good. But if he fail, as fail he will, to perform a task which is beyond the stretch of human power, he will be knocked off his pedestal without delay and without remorse, and Germany will be forced to go about and find another hero. In the search, constantly repeated, she will waste the poor enthusiasm that is left her, and, bereft of leaders, will take refuge in revolution, or be forced to surrender, without conditions, to superior wisdom and greater force.

We may take the Kaiser's humiliation, therefore, as a mark of Germany's hopelessness. Nor are other signs wanting of the approaching

crash. The few candid men that are left in Germany cannot but see and proclaim the change which is coming over their aims and their ambitions. But let us not deceive ourselves. The Prussian, truculent in prosperity, is Pecksniff incarnate when the fates fight against him. He is as ready to play the hypocrite as to play the burglar. He holds himself up to the public, especially to the neutral, gaze as a blameless peacemonger, who was suddenly attacked, in all his unpreparedness, by a world in arms. He has been sedulous in spreading this legend over the earth, and he has persuaded those to listen who are perfectly convinced that the legend has no foundation in fact. Even the weakest neutral knows that when a burglar is found with crowbar and jemmy upon him, the pious householder whom he means to rob is not guilty of assault and battery. However, the Germans believe in propaganda, and they have spent a vast deal of time and money upon perverting the opinion of neutral countries. We cannot regret that we have not followed them into this pit of irrelevant deception. The best form of propaganda is a victory in the field, and when we have won that we shall find that the neutrals will be very easily persuaded of the truth about Germany. Meanwhile, one thing is certain: the Germans are preparing, with all their cunning and ingenuity, to contrive a peace suitable for themselves. As we have said, they will pro-

claim themselves far and wide the aggrieved parties, yet will profess their readiness to discuss terms, and will do their best to throw the burden of continuing the war upon the shoulders of the Allies. They will be crafty, false, insidious. They will appeal to the sentimentality of the neutrals, to their desire of resuming the normal life of States. They will strive to turn to good account the Presidential election in America, as well as the known proclivities of the Pope. They chose the moment for going to war. They will choose, so they fondly hope, the moment for making peace.

Happily they will fail in this project, as they have failed in the conduct of their campaign. Like all cunning people, they have over-played their part. The Allies, being forewarned, are also forearmed. The attempts at peace have been made openly and without subtlety. What German ever was subtle? We have witnessed the spectacle of Herr Münsterberg proclaiming that an alliance of England with Germany and the United States is the best guarantee for the peace and the prosperity of the world. The professor who talks this nonsense must know as little of England as he knows of honour. He will hardly bamboozle the youngest of his class at Harvard. But even though his folly render him innocuous, we must remember that Germany does not disdain the humblest tools, and we may accept him as a symptom of Germany's prevailing desire.

A far deeper plot—*un complot pacifiste*—is revealed in a recent number of 'La Semaine Littéraire,' published in Geneva, and recently cited in 'The Morning Post.' The author of the article, who is said to be a "political personage" in a great neutral country, formally utters a warning which we cannot disregard. He tells us that a network of German influences is spread over belligerent and neutral countries, with the object of patching up a peace which will leave Germany free to build up her power again and once more to challenge the domination of the world with better success. North and south, east and west, the Germans are explaining that they are defending themselves against an unjust aggression, and that they wish nothing better than to re-establish the peace which, had they had their way, would never have been broken. The crusade is being carried on with great ingenuity. "The neutrals," we are told, "are constantly being informed that the idea that the right is only on the side of the Allies is merely a façade, and that Germany has never really thought of imposing its *kultur* and its political hegemony on the world, nor has it ever wished to annex territories which it did not acquire by right." The written word remains, and the fierce boasts made by the professors and other apostles of *kultur* in 1914 are not yet forgotten. But Germany trusts to the weakness of human memory, and relies also on the

power of the purse. In this prosecution of a favourable peace no money is spared. Cosmopolitan finance, which means Jewish, and therefore German finance, is said to be working after its occult fashion to realise the Kaiser's hopes. Thus we see clearly the danger which we have to meet, and the "political personage" who writes the warning article tells us also in what shape the danger will assail us. "Well-informed persons," he writes, "know that a *mise-en-scène* is being prepared by President Wilson, the Pope, and the German Emperor. As soon as the ground seems sufficiently well prepared, either the Pope or the President will take the initiative and offer his mediation. The one will immediately be supported by the other, and the Emperor will reply to the offer made him that he accepts intervention without condition. This will be easy for him, as all the conditions to be demanded of the Allies will have been settled beforehand by Germany and the mediators." If there be any that think this suggestion fantastic, let them remember that not many months ago we were asked to make a hasty settlement in Ireland, in the very face of rebellion, because that settlement would be pleasing to the President of the United States!

Had we a firm faith in our Government all the plots of Germany and the neutrals would be indifferent to us. We have heard many times that Mr Asquith, like Count Fosco, "sticks at nothing,"

and we do not believe it. We know that Lord Haldane, the friend of Herr Ballin and of the Kaiser, the garrulous panegyrist of Germany, is still in the innermost confidence of the Prime Minister and of the Foreign Secretary. We have therefore every cause to be nervous, and the slightest whisper of peace should be caught and scrutinised by every citizen who has his country's welfare at heart. For the only peace that will satisfy us will be unlike any other peace that has ever been made. It will be no question of discussing terms with an honourable opponent. Our duty will be to punish the criminal among the nations, and to take care that it is left unable, for many generations, to resume its course of crime. We must see to it that the murderers, who have carried on their business in Belgium and in France as well as within the boundaries of Germany itself, shall be brought sternly to justice. The stolen goods, torn from many a château and many a church, must be discovered and returned. The destroyed towns and villages must be rebuilt. The Allies will sit not merely as a conference of diplomatists, but as a bench of judges. And to achieve this work of justice, we must exact from Germany an unconditional surrender. We will be content with no com-

promise, no hustled peace. We will turn a deaf ear to the blandishments of interested neutrals, remembering that in the settlement of this war they only shall take part who have died and bled for their fatherlands, and that we will permit the interference of no neutrals, however good their intentions may seem, however lofty their professions may be.

If the path which we have to follow lies plain before us, we shall not soon arrive at the end. The successes which we are winning on the field are but the prelude to actions upon a vaster scale. So long as the neutrals are kept at bay Germany will find it beyond her strength to surrender. She dares not breathe the truth to her citizens that the war is lost. She has climbed so lofty a pinnacle of arrogance that she has a long and weary way to fall before again she stands upon the earth. Perhaps she regrets now her braggings and her boastings. With an official press to help it is not difficult to deceive a people. The hardship comes when the people, blinded by pride, has to be undeceived. And if we are resolute in war, resolute also in turning a deaf ear to the siren of intervention, peace will come when Germany, beaten in the field, is at last able to break through the web of falsehood which entangles her.

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THE SCENE OF WAR.—II.

A GREEK SYMPOSIUM.

IT was my intention to have gone to Kavalla, but the sailing of the Greek steamers was not to be relied upon, and the prospect of another week of detention on these shores was uninviting. Greater events were impending in Italy, and the Adriatic beckoned me across its waters.

We left Salonica about three o'clock of a sunlit day, and made good headway as far as the outer Cape of Kara Bournu, but were soon brought to a standstill by the French authorities, who control all departures from the port.

There were other boats assembled for the same purpose about the guardship, and from moment to moment the boats which carry the coasting trade, with all their panoply of sail, drew up with the grace of a by-gone age by the grey ship's side.

Then at last after many de-

lays we were released from this bondage; some one gave the signal to start, a torpedo-boat led the way through the maze of mines, and steamers and sailing craft followed anxiously in its wake until we had passed into the freedom of the open sea. The evening sunlight was bathing the low green shores of Kara Bournu and its salmon-tinted cliffs, and making a haze of purple and silver along the brows of Olympus as we passed upon our way.

At nightfall, after dinner, a great political argumentation took place in the saloon. The ultra - Venizelists assembled about the person of the Chandler to the Allied Fleet upon the one side, the Royalists, led by the Captain, on the other; while an old Greek officer took up a place in the centre, with one or two others whose attitude was that of reserve.

The Chandler and the Captain were evidently the protagonists of the debate, and each as he became seized with the afflatus of speech rose from his chair, advanced with a menacing air towards the opposition, and flung his arguments with great force and passionate declamation within an inch of their faces. Then all joined in with loud voices but the one or two, and there was a Babel of speech throughout the little saloon, from whose walls a portrait of the Scotch owner gazed tranquilly upon the excited company. Venizelos, Constantine, English, French, Germans, Rumanians, were names that stood out like prominent landmarks from the tropical forest of their speech.

After it was all over, my cabin companion, a clever and ardent soul, said that there would soon be a Revolution, that he loved the English, that it was a pity Venizelos had not long since sent a great personage about his business when he had the chance, and that in short the world of the Hellenes was all awry.

But one of the most serious and reserved of those present said to me that he had little use for such ill-considered arguments, that his country was passing through a difficult crisis, and that while most

were for Venizelos, they also had a good king. He frankly admitted that in his opinion the best thing that could happen for Greece would be an inconclusive peace. This man had lived in England, France, and Germany; and his personal sympathies, he said, were with England, which he considered the most civilised and the most liberal country in the world.

"In Salonica," he said, "we are all of one mind, that the English officer is a thorough gentleman; there is no one else his equal."

Leaving the assembly to its loud deliberations, while the Chandler, worn out with the fury of his speech, lay with his head lopping over his neighbour's breast asleep, I stepped outside to see the crescent moon sending her trail of silver down the sea, the dark outline of Olympus with a faint shimmer of snow upon his brows, cut clear against the starry sky. The ship sped gallantly forward upon her destiny, the night was of a soft and clarified beauty, and bright lights burnt over the bows, where there was painted in blue and white the neutral flag of Greece. It was in the nature of a litany to the marauding Hun,—*"Spare us, good Boche."*

AN IDYLL OF PELION.

At dawn we entered the Gulf of Volo, and in the vivid sunlight came to anchor opposite this little town and

in the midst of its wide circle of hills. A carriage carried us—a party of three, consisting of the Lover of England who

wished for an inconclusive peace, the Widow of a Serbian colonel who had been killed in the retreat to Valona, and the writer—up the steep slopes of Pelion to the village of Porta Ria, which was a revelation through its cleanliness and its charm of what a Greek village can be. There never was anywhere in the world a sweeter spot than this.

To the devotion of one of its citizens it owes its fine hotel, its admirable school, its excellent drainage, and the costly road that makes it accessible to carriages and motor-cars from Volo. For it is an endearing custom of the Greeks, when they have made their fortunes abroad, to return for their remaining years to their native towns and villages and to bestow upon them the surplus of their wealth. It is mainly to such contributions that Athens—which belongs after all to the whole world, and not merely to the modern Greeks—owes its beautiful public buildings, and the manifest progress of the past sixteen years. Whatever their faults, there is no question that these people love their Hellas with a sincere and fervent devotion. Alas! that they should have suffered its honour to be tarnished in these fallen days.

To Nature, Porta Ria, like its neighbouring villages, the famous Twenty-Four of Pelion, owes a site that overlooks the lake-like expanses of the Gulf of Volo, its noble plane-trees, its running waters, and its meadows full of flowers. It

is in truth a rural Elysium, and its people spare no efforts to maintain its character. The village Place is flagged with slate and roofed with the foliage of magnificent plane-trees, the eastern *chinar*; and the school is bright with roses, lilacs, and beds of poppies.

We entered this model place to find all the little boys and girls assembled, and were shown the very neat kindergarten objects made by the children. Our proposal to pay for one or two that were given us was rejected with exclamations of denial. The little Achilles and Persephones sang a national song about the planting of the Greek Flag on the walls of Constantinople, unaware of the decline in the fortunes of their country; and upon my asking the name of one of the prettiest little girls, I found that it was Aphrodite!

The schoolmistress was a practical little woman, born of the village, and as much as possible like a schoolma'am from a New-England State. The children varied from light blondes with blue eyes to dark brunettes with Mahomedan faces, and in this little community of mixed blood there was, as sometimes happens when North and South meet, one with the most beautiful shade of auburn imaginable. They all liked being patted on the head, and were evidently affectionate and well brought-up.

We looked in at an adjoining cottage, and found its inner court so charming with its marble fountain and pergola

of vines, its syringas, lilacs, and roses, its mayflower in bloom, its absolute purity and cleanliness, that we crossed the threshold and were greeted by a friendly and happy-looking old man who invited us to enter, brought chairs for us to sit on, and introduced us to his mother, a white-haired old woman with the most gentle and considerate face.

This family had lost twelve thousand pounds at Dedea-gatch on its transfer to the Bulgars, but had accepted their losses with a quiet resignation.

"We are happy," he said, "in our native place, in this little home. We have health and peace of mind. As to the money, we have but to cut down our expenses and live more simply."

In the garden of the hotel, where we took a siesta, there were pansies, daisies, stocks, wallflowers, campanulas, roses, and guelder-roses, and a *Maréchal Niel* spread its wealth of yellow over the walls.

Even the common houses were beautiful, with their waterfalls and wooden seats under the great trees, and their glimpses of the sea. It was in the midst of these rural

scenes that I came upon a remarkable figure, the Parisian Bohemian to the life, no less a person than the late editor of 'The Figaro' and a former Prefect of Seres. He also was a native of Elysium, and was returned here to shelter in the afternoon of his life.

If I have dwelt thus upon the charms of this village of Pelion, it is because not only are they incontestable, but they met one as it were 'twixt wind and water; between the martial airs and subtle policies of Greece and the thunder of real war upon the Western Front.

"*Pauvre Serbie* ; oh my unhappy country," I heard our Serbian companion say more than once as we looked upon this happy place; and turning to us she said, "Oh, gentlemen, if you but knew what we have endured—the horrors, oh! the horrors they have perpetrated in homes just like these. *Cannot* you understand? And you, sir, if your country had but known, would it ever have left us to our fate?"

But the Cautious Politician only shook his head. For him there was no solution like that of an Inconclusive Peace.

THE GULF OF CORINTH.

My last recollection of the Piræus is of the chief officer, seated on the railings at the stern of our ill-found ship, shouting at the top of his voice to the crew and gesticulating with a passion and

fervour that left me dumb. I came to the conclusion that these southern races, with all their excitability, must have the strongest nerves of any people in the world, for the way in which they pour out their

vital forces over next to nothing is little short of stupendous.

We wriggled slowly out of the crowded harbour, where a number of German ships were taking a holiday, and with an increasing speed made for the Bay of Salamis, where in the distance the Greek fleet, bound for Nowhere, was emitting clouds of dense black smoke. Salamis and the fleet of Greece! What ironies does time accomplish.

Our course lay through the Corinthian Canal, whose walls rose up magnificently upon either hand like the bulwarks of some Titan's castle. They might have been sliced with a sword. The sea lay very clear and green below, and the colour of these walls was a golden yellow. Upon the bridge that spans the canal a sentry stood with his fixed bayonet, like a little tin soldier, far above our heads. We emerged where Corinth suns herself under the grey dome of her ancient Acropolis, and were enraptured once more with the

memories that throng about these classic shores. Does any one, I wonder, ever forget such things?

As we steamed through this inner sea the broad round mass of Helicon rose upon our right, and Parnassus with his stately summit glittered in the sky. There were sailing ships as of old running before the breeze, and white villages along the shores.

Upon our left the land rose high and mountainous, its summits still white with snow, and it came to the sea's edge not in a single wall but in successive stages, so that in the grey evening they looked like the shadowy and mysterious outworks of another world. And this was the Peloponnesus we were looking upon, and the Spartans of old lived beyond these mountains in their innermost recesses. For me the night as we sailed through it was weighted with these shadows of a mighty past. I could think but little of the war.

THE ADRIATIC.

Towards morning we passed by Cephalonia into the open sea, and it might have been thought that here upon the fringe of Italy, hard by the Austrian shores, we should have felt the impact of the war; but it was not so. An air of great peace and tranquillity lay upon the ship; no one spoke of torpedoes or submarines, and no one came to detain us or to inspect our

papers. The swallows flew round us in swift circles and sat in lines upon the rigging, and a small bird frightened out of its course came and found a momentary rest upon a man's shoulders. It was a halcyon voyage, unflecked by any incident.

This man whom the bird had selected for its confidence was a doctor from Corfu, and he told me some terrible

things of the Serbian retreat through the mountains. "You can have no conception," he said, "of the pitiable condition in which they arrived. Their clothes were in tatters, their beards had grown long; they were gaunt, famished, and stricken with disease. Upon their first arrival hundreds died daily; and many who had died on their way from Durazzo were thrown into the sea. For seven days, during the agony of their retreat, these people were without food; and even when they got to Durazzo, they had to pay

as much as twenty francs for a bit of bread. Their hearts," he added, "are burning with hatred for the Bulgars and the Austrians; and with indignation at what they consider the treachery of our people. But they have made an astonishing recovery, and a hundred and twenty thousand of them are now well fitted for war. You will see what an account they will give of themselves. Dysentery, cholera, these were the diseases that slew them. If you could only have seen them when they arrived!"

ROME.

At Messina we lay for a season in the clutches of the war, but at Naples the world wagged very much as of old, save that happily the Boche was not abroad. The countryside, as the train bore me to Rome, was full of peace and of the beauty of Italy, Virgilian in its suggestion, with its wedded vines and elms, its serried acres and its olive groves silvering upon the hills; its lordly towns and rich pastures, with the milch cattle lowing in the fields. But two thousand additional years of toil had left their impress upon the scene, and the scarped hillsides over which the furrows passed had been smoothened down to gentle billows and waves of land. All the grandeur and the softness of Italy were here.

As the evening dusk came on, the mountains receded and the plain became wide and

apt for a great city. We had reached the Campagna. The lights of passing trains twinkled across its surface, and here and there upon its monotony glowed the little village constellations. The towns on the hillsides near Rome shone with their electric fires, each one separate in the pervading darkness like a ship at sea; and in the greyness there loomed the mighty forms of aqueducts, like ghosts from a vanished past. I felt that I had come through a land touched with mysteries of landscape, and old with the imprints of mighty generations of men, yet a land that was peaceful and lovely and unaware of war.

And thus we entered the thronging streets of Rome.

It was another world that I looked upon amidst the glories of the Palazzo Colonna. For here, through the enter-

prise of Prince Colonna, a collection of French pictures of the War had been gathered together, and so engrossing were these in their character that one had no eyes for the older beauties of the building. Yet were they for the most part lacking in genius, and in the gleam of great Art. For modern war is not a beautiful thing; nor does it lend itself much to the Art of the painter. It is Science in a brutal form. Its influence upon all Art will probably prove to be destructive; and at the best the War will be an interlude that Art will willingly forget.

A large number of these pictures was concerned with the brutality of the Hun; with the harshness of burning towns and ruined churches; with the agonies of women and children suffering at the hands of the Barbarian; and with the Boche's coarseness, self-indulgence, and thieving in occupied country. The worst horrors, of which the stern and terrible record is written in the French official publications, were not depicted here. For there are some things that even realism jibs at. But there were some vivid impressions—one, for instance, which depicted the War as a cyclone driving furiously upon its course with the cruel faces and the brazen helmets of the Boche in its midst, while the earth lay prone at its mercy below; and there were pictures which touched the War from the Christian standpoint, but, as it seemed to me, with little conviction. The painters were evidently

more concerned with the villainess of their enemies than with the sinfulness of War. I do not remember to have seen even one that rose above such themes to the contemplation of the War as a possible chastisement from God of the sins of men; or as Rodin put it to a friend in Rome, "*C'est un fléau que nous avons mérité.*"

Amongst the better pictures were those which touched human emotions of a universal kind: such as George Scott's "Last Vigil," showing a dying General watched over by a dragoon, a candle blown by the wind, and the dawn breaking through the window. Another showed an emaciated peasant soldier straining up in his last moments to kiss his poor old mother. "*Maman . . . Maman,*" were the words upon his lips. This was from the bedrock of human nature in France; for it is to his mother that the Frenchman turns in his agony. Of the glory, of the splendour of war as in by-gone days, there was nothing. One could see that here was a people defending itself against a bully,—a people willing to die for its honour and its love of country, but not from the desire as of old to conquer and annex. There was no trace in these pictures of the Napoleonic spirit.

More interesting than our own were the portraits of the French Generals—a remarkable series. The incident of the death of General Castelnau's son—"Va mon fils! tu as la plus belle mort que l'on puisse souhaiter"—was the subject of a picture; and in

all these there was evident the French attitude of devotion, as of children to a father, to those who lead them in war. They love their Generals, these French, not as the Peninsular soldier loved his Iron Duke, or as the British public loved its "K. of K.," but as the Old Guard loved the Little Corporal. They say that France has changed, but in these respects she has not changed. You will see here written plainly in these pictures the greater emotion, the Celtic strain, in the soul of her people.

There are documents other than those issued from official sources, and it seemed to me that through this collection of pictures gathered together in Rome I had seen a little way into the Soul of France.

For Rome herself one had no heart in the circumstances of the hour. One's mind would not settle to her ancient glories, her great galleries and stores of Art; St Peter's; the Vatican. . . . These things failed to attract. The pictures of her Masters, their Madonnas and Saints, left one cold and unmoved. They seemed dead and irrelevant, like the modes of a bygone day.

Yet was the city beautiful; yet were there moments that lay like a benediction upon one's spirit.

As I sat by the high wall of

the Pincio one evening, the sun shone bright and golden over the Eternal City. A thousand swallows flew overhead; the inner spaces of the garden were dark with velvet shadows, along which the level sunlight poured in glades of light; the noble trees of the garden, the green lawns, the bright flower-beds, the beautiful large-eyed women, the general air of courtesy and of regard for others, the record of three thousand years that lay spread before my gaze—all these things were here.

Here I listened, as it were, to the last words of a civilisation that had slowly and through all vicissitudes attained to this pitch of perfection; here was the marvellous output of a people who are perhaps the most gifted of the peoples of the world; here was a very sanctuary of Art, a storehouse of the Soul; and *there*. . . . Well! there was the Trench,—a cut in the earth,—a ditch, in which some fifteen hundred millions of men were gathered together with but one purpose—to kill or to be killed; yet inspired with a valour and a patriotism that no age has equalled. Behind all these strange and bewildering contrasts I could not but think that there moved some inscrutable purpose of God, to which, in the gathering darkness, I could find no clue.

THE ZONE OF WAR.

Milan, the great northern city, has its life in war as it has in peace, a nucleus of

energy and wealth and toil; and you wouldn't know that War was abroad as you walk

along its busy streets, if it were not for the presence of soldiers in the grey of the Italian army and the occasional flight of an aeroplane overhead.

But from the moment I passed into the railway station, I passed into the shadow of the war. It was nearly ten o'clock at night, and the train was full of soldiers, and the platforms were so crowded with them that there was scarcely room to move.

A little later, in the quiet stillness of midnight, we lay alongside a train of wounded from the front. The red moon was sinking in a streak of blood upon the horizon. In each car the stretchers were slung, and the sick men lay very peacefully there in the light, their wounded limbs bound up, and now and then one turned wearily and drew his cloak over him, his cap over his eyes.

It must have been some instinct that brought us all to the windows at this solemn hour.

In the eyes of more than one woman there were tears; in their forms a shrinking as if they had been hurt. As we moved, the whole length of the train of the wounded defiled before us. In one carriage the blinds were down, and there was a great quietness.

"The Dead!" whispered the onlookers.

And then another train came by that was full of Austrian prisoners.

At Vicenza the Italian searchlights were playing upon the horizon, and the sound of guns was audible in the night's stillness.

"The Austrians are but fifteen miles away," said the man next me, with a strain in his voice.

At Mestre, the gate of Venice, we left the train for Udine. The station restaurant was full of officers in uniform; the waiters were flying up and down with their pots of coffee and milk. The platform was thick with men. We were here upon the very fringe of war.

At every station there was a place for the military commander; wherever a stream flowed under the railway line, wherever a road crossed it, there stood a soldier with his bayonet fixed.

In the fields the women were driving the great cattle through the serried fields. Along the border rose the Friulian Mountains in a great blue wall, the summits of the Alps beyond them white with shining snow.

Up there the world was at issue.

It was a pleasant country at foot, stored with memories of Venetian supremacy. There were castles and country-houses on the lower hills; campaniles of the Venetian style; streams and meadows, plane-trees heavy with shade; white roads, and the peasantry moving along them as in days of peace.

And yet the impress of war was visibly written upon the quiet scene. As we crossed a river we looked down upon the Italian trenches; upon long lines of shelters for riflemen.

At the larger towns there were mountain-guns, and cav-

alry at exercise and infantry on parade. There were hangers, grey and elephantine in the green fields. In great barns by the roadside there were sentries with bayonets fixed, and groups of men in the grey uniform amidst the yellow hay. There were strings of fretful mules; Alpini with the eagle's feather in their

hats; Bersaglieri with their cock's-plumes falling about them in a shower; the gendarmes, two by two, their customary splendour veiled in dusty grey. At the wayside stations there were free refreshment stalls for the soldiers, served by ladies in white.

And so we came to our destination.

THE ISONZO.

It is a quarter to nine, and the powerful Fiat which is to carry us beyond the Isonzo is waiting outside an old palace in the Venetian town, where the headquarters of the army are established; a beautiful old town, inscribed with memories of the Great Republic.

A couple of minutes suffice to carry us beyond its precincts; and my first sensation is one of rushing through the fresh morning air, along a white country road, at fifty miles an hour. Avenues of plane-trees, meadows full of flowers, fields of corn, vineyards and orchards; these pass rapidly like pictures on a screen. Beyond them shine the white summits of the Carnian Alps; and the blue forefront of the mountains stands like a giant's wall upon our left. Villages that in ordinary times might tempt us, by their simple old-world charms, to linger by the wayside, are passed in a flash, and it is not till we enter the old fortified town of P——, with its emblazoned gate and its walls and bastions of the days of

Louis Quatorze, that the motor slows down to the kind of pace that makes for detailed observation. Yet how many have been the incidents by the way! Motor-lorries returning from the front, one after the other, in rapid succession; Sicilian hay-carts, bright with pictures of saints and kings; and thousands of brave men in the grey of the Italian army, in barracks by the wayside, in carts and on horseback, who pass by us as the film of a cinema passes before the eyes of the spectators. Some of these men have blue eyes; some have rifles, some laugh, and some stand to attention and salute; some ride easy in the saddle as to the manner born, others apprehensively as the motor rushes past them on the crowded road; and some are slight and tall, and others stout and short; cavalry, infantry, guns. They pass so rapidly that one guesses at rather than sees these details.

There is dust along the highway, and in places where some lorry or automobile has passed it lies like a yellow cloud; and

we run into it, and for a brief moment see as little of the world as one might see through a storm in the desert or a London fog.

And thus far, travelling as we are at high speed, we have either met or overtaken all other travellers on the road; but there comes a moment—as it comes to all men soon or late—when we realise that there is some one of Greater Consequence upon the road than ourselves. A keen blast as from a syren bursts upon us from behind, the car swerves a little to the right, and in a flash a grey automobile with four occupants has passed us, and is leaving us rapidly behind.

"*Il Re*," murmurs the officer beside us, touching his cap.

We can scarcely distinguish his small, ardent figure; but no Italian is ever in doubt about his brave little King. Beside him is Porro, the Chief of the Staff. They are bound for some point on the front; but to-morrow the swift traveller will be back in Rome strenuously at work, the leader and servant of his people.

Following the King, who has disappeared as if by magic, we cross the frontier, and are entered within the territories of Austria, now redeemed to Italy. The Isonzo lies before us, with two bridges across it—one of iron for the railway, the other of wood. Here at the bridge-head a gendarme in grey, with dust upon his sun-burnt face, and the stern, serious look that men wear in the zone of shells and gun-fire, stops us and asks to see our

credentials. Even the officer beside us has to submit to this test. And then with a quick, searching, half-dubious glance at each of us, he withdraws a step, and the car moves over the planks of the bridge. Here, upon many a day since the war began, the fire of the Austrian guns has been concentrated, and time and again this bridge has been set alight and damaged by violent cannonade. To-day we pass it without incident, more fortunate than some who have come thus far and have had to return, their desire unsatisfied. It is all a matter of luck.

If you look at a map of this country you will see that the road from the bridge-head at the Isonzo to Monfalcone runs in a line that might have been drawn along a ruler. It thus offers an ideal mark to the Austrian batteries on the opposite heights of the Doberdo plateau (since won by Italian valour), and a motor passing along it presents a very tempting object to the Austrian gunners. For this reason screens of leaves have been hung a few feet above the road and across it from the trees upon either side, and upon our left there are hurdles and branches of trees, wherever a gap in the hedge leaves the road exposed.

Along this interesting thoroughfare the car races at ninety kilometres an hour; and there is no traffic here, but that of an ammunition lorry rumbling on its way, or a despatch-rider bending low over his machine.

Thus we come to Monfal-

cone, a town that lives under the guns and rifles of the enemy. It has no inhabitants now but soldiers. Every house in it is bespattered with bullet-holes; nearly every pane of glass in it is broken; and there are vast rents in its walls and roofs, where shells have exploded. What was once a church by the principal thoroughfare, is now a space within four battered walls, filled with shattered timber and fallen frescoes, and gaping to the sky; the sides of some of the houses have been rent away as by the claws of a great beast, exposing, as in earthquake pictures, the interiors of the rooms.

It is a scene of desolation.

Here is what was once a barber's shop—its plate-glass smashed to pieces, the legend over it torn away; here what was once a pretty villa, with dainty rooms and a garden bright with flowers. It is now a shambles, and the garden is run wild, for it is more than a year since Monfalcone felt the sirocco of War. Here is a big building, in which the boys of the town were taught all the virtues of civilisation, now a somewhat precarious barracks, with sand-bags under its roof and soldiers' heads peeping over its barricaded windows; and here, where you might least expect to find them, are the Headquarters of the Brigadier in Command.

The car is left in the shelter of a stable where some mules and horses are tethered; we cross a cobbled yard and pass along a sand-bagged alley, and

enter a small dark room in the basement, where the General and his staff are at work. The room is hung with an old brown and crimson paper; there is a sofa at one end, a cheap oleograph on the wall, an Austrian stove, a writing-table covered with military forms. One wonders idly who were its former occupants.

The General is a tall, lean man, with a stern but kindly face; and he might pass for an Englishman, were it not for just that indefinable something which distinguishes men of one race from those of another. Perhaps we might say that his manner is softer and more equal than that of an English officer of his rank.

We are barely introduced when a soldier-waiter brings in a tray of glasses and a bottle of wine; and the General, with a gesture of apology, invites us to share his modest hospitality. Then, upon a map, he marks with a blue and red pencil the opposing trenches and the line of battle we are now to see. His instructions are given to a young officer on his Staff, a man of quite striking beauty, whose classic features, blue eyes, and abundant hair, cut and groomed in the present mode, might take any woman's heart.

"You will take them," he says, "to the old Austrian tower on the hill, and down to the first line of trenches; and thereafter along Joffre's Camminamento, to the railway station. You will be careful there, and there."

"Well, good-bye, gentlemen,

and I wish you an interesting tour."

My next recollection is of slowly climbing the side of a pine-clad hill in the full glare of an Italian sun, which made me realise how little anything in the world matters, so that one's body is comfortable; and just then an Austrian 77 came whizzing over the tops of the pine-trees, with a wheezz . . . eet, and fell with a burst and a puff of white dust and smoke some thirty yards away. I found myself ducking with a sense of ignominy upon me. It is a curious instinctive sensation, bringing a crick to the back of one's neck, and a protest to one's lips—with a secret resolve not to be caught at it again. But the very next shot finds one involved in the same ignominy, until use hardens one to the sensation.

Then we turned aside from this shattered path that was strewn with the *débris* of past cannonades, into the bedraggled wood, where there were trenches, and so came to the old Venetian tower with its inscription of the year 1615, whence there is now, as of old, a commanding view of the military position. We stood on the safe side of the tower, but even here there was evidence of recent explosions, while upon the exposed side, which we approached with some care, it was evident the Austrian batteries had concentrated their fire. Large masses of the ancient walls, whose cement was now as hard as iron, had been torn away by its furious

impact; yet the old castle stood bravely fronting its enemies, who were but the other day its masters, while new walls were being built up beside it from day to day to repair the damage that was done. It must be an odd sensation to be locked in here, when the guns are at work, for there is little more than a shallow ravine between it and the Austrian emplacements.

From here we passed down the hillside, along the narrow trenches of communication, cut in the solid rock, to the first line, whence over the sand-bags and through the cemented loopholes we looked upon the scene of war.

It was a scene designed by Nature with a hand lavish of beauty; for there beyond the brook, and the low hills upon its farther shore, spread a blue-green world, with shadow and sunlight chasing each other across it in lazy pursuit, and beyond it the high ramparts of the Julian Alps, like the walls of some Titan's castle, whose keep was made splendid with the luminous brightness and gleam of snow.

Here were majesty, dominion, and power.

And then one's roving eye came back to the low bare foot-hills opposite,—the dread Carso—where so many men have died, to the Austrian trenches, yellow where the sand-bags and the parapets ran like a sheep-pen along the ridge; dark and sinister, where the barbed wire, rust-red, the colour of old blood-stains, lay like a trap for those who would

venture into this dreadful web.

And then a little nearer it fell to the Italian trenches, which ran in places parallel to those of their enemies, and at others jutted out sharply in a sort of pyramid or lance-head, almost to the very edge of theirs; and yet again, as seen by the eye from here, in a line that seemed to take up and continue along the brink of the plateau the line of the hated *Tedeschi*.

And here, immediately below the cemented loophole, was our own barbed wire, tangled and sinister; and beyond its coils, in an outpost of observation, a grey soldier reclining, with his rifle by his side, and his gaze fixed on the enemy opposite.

Every now and then a puff of cloud appeared over the crest of the hungry hillside, and the boom of a big gun filled the air; and every now and then, more frequent and more insistent, the scream of a 77, travelling swiftly overhead, fell sharply upon our ears, and made us stoop a little lower behind the line of sand-bags.

I felt that I wanted to be alone. I should have liked to spend a day and a night here, and to have seen the life of the soldier through at least one circuit of the revolving world—the benediction of the night falling upon friend and foe alike, the gleam of the dawn on the snowy summits. But such things are not permitted to the passing guest. All that I could attain

was to leave our party, where the General's Aide-de-camp was explaining the military positions, and look out upon the strange scene from another embrasure, of which I was the only occupant. Here, in the narrow loophole, there lay a little pile of empty cartridge-cases, that told their own tale. I wondered how many had found their billet, and whether the man himself had been killed. There was nothing to show.

A soldier touched me on the elbow, and pointed down the dark communication trench along which the rest of my party were disappearing. It took us into a strange world, for here were men lying wrapped in sleep, head to foot, careless of all but rest. The trench was narrow, and we had to step past them, and over them, with care; but they slept on. In places the trench became a tunnel so dark that we could not see, and every now and then there was a barbed door, that could be swiftly closed in case of invasion.

Thus we came of a sudden into the sunlight once more, and upon the man with his rifle in the observation-post, and saw all that any man can see of his enemy, until the moment comes to rise up and rush across that brief space that divides one people from another.

The scene before us was historic, for it was the edge of that Carso plateau whose name is as familiar as Mons. Some of the hardest fighting of the Italian war has taken place here.

Bare, hard, and yellow, with scarcely a tree upon it, it ends on the Italian side in an abrupt wall, but slopes downward, once the ridge has been won, towards Trieste. Its lack of cover, its iron surface, place the advancing Italians at the mercy of their enemy, who long before the war took care to prepare a shelter for his guns, in deep cuttings and caves and tunnels in the rock. Time and again the valour of the Italian attack has been broken before the formidable obstacle, and thousands of men have died in the effort to win even that line of trenches along the crest, which if you look upon it, on even a large-scale map, seems so small an accomplishment.

That low hill yonder, to which the plateau rises with a slight ascent, is known amongst the men here as the Hill of Death; and each soldier who went forward to the attack had to carry his sand-bag or spadeful of earth, to make a shelter for himself it might be, but more often for those who came after him, when he was dead.

But the hardest part of it all is, that even when the plateau is won, its further slope, exposed to the fire of heavy guns on the Austrian heights beyond, makes it a deadly thoroughfare for those who would march along it to Trieste. So it happened that the plateau still remained in the possession of Austria, and that as we looked across towards it that day, we could see the line of the trenches as plainly as our own.

We spent nearly an hour here along this front, gazing through the loopholes, talking in whispers over the difficulties of the position, sheltering every now and then from the almost tropical sun, being warned when we became careless and stood erect; and all the time, with a sort of cruel leisurely persistence, the Austrian 77's flew over our heads, seeking the Italian pioneers at work on a railway some hundred yards away.

Then we went on through trench after trench, through caves and tunnels, through the pine-woods and the subterranean fortress in whose endless ramifications we were involved, till we came with a sudden joy upon a glimpse of the sea, far-spread below us,—blue, tranquil, and asleep, under the Castle of Dwina, the villas of Miramar, and the long-coveted, still-distant city of Trieste.

We had now passed into the second and third lines of trenches, and the grey soldiery clustered about us, thick as summer flies. Some of them lay by the trench sides, sunk in sleep; others were writing post-cards and letters to their women at home. Here was one with a bit of canvas spread over his head, drawing a pair of love-birds with laborious care, "to pass the time," he said; another stolidly eating his macaroni; a couple more carrying a hundredweight of the morning paper, slung over a pole, like grapes of Eschol; while those who had already been supplied were busy read-

ing and tracing with their fingers the news of the Russian victories. When they looked up it was with a gleam in their eyes, as of men who had seen a vision. In a cave that went deep down into the bowels of the hill, an officer was seated at a table, writing official papers; in another, whose front was decorated in plaster with a figure of the Virgin, the name and the number of a regiment, a hundred men sat close about the narrow stairs that descended sharply into the blackness of the earth, sheltering from the sun; and every here and there a man lay in some small hollow scooped out of the side of the trench—the *Comminamento Joffre*—his helmet over his eyes, his body relaxed in sleep.

These men, into whose world we had come with a feeling almost of intrusion, looked at us, some with friendliness, some with curiosity, some with indifference. More than once the American accent broke the comparative stillness. "Say, Mister; yore Eng-lish, ain't yer?" "Hah! I guessed that." "Oh yes, I been in Canada; plenty good money out there. I go back soon as this war be over; but glad to come and fight for my country. Sure. So long."

Life was not so still and quiet here in these back trenches. Yet were there abundant evidences of war. The sparse pine-trees were torn and mangled by the passing shells; there were gaping holes in the ground and in the walls, and unexploded shells that

were turning yellow with the rust. One of these, a 405, had found its resting-place, nose imbedded, in the inner wall of the trench along which we passed.

Through this odd world we descended upon what was once the station of Monfalcone. But little of it now remained. Its windows and doors, long since shattered to pieces, were built up with sand-bags; its walls were pitted with bullet-holes, and rent with shells; its interior was a wreck. Upon the walls in the passage where the ticket-checkers stand, there still hung in strips the time-tables for May 1915. The little station hotel outside was but a shell; yet the name of its proprietor, forlornly visible, rattled over the lintel of the door. As we walked past it across the open space where the cabmen and the commissionaires wait, a shell came shrieking over our heads, and fell with a roar in the wood through which we had come.

It was a scene, as I have said, of desolation; and even the wild flowers that had come with the summer, looked faded and worn amidst these harsh surroundings. I stooped to pick a few; and as I did so my fingers touched a clip of five cartridges that must have dropped here from the hand of a soldier, to whom they could be of no further use.

From the station we returned to the streets of Monfalcone; and as we passed along its chestnut avenues another shell tore through the branches and exploded in the

garden of a villa, against whose walls the resulting fragments of stone rattled with a patter like that of hail. Along the forsaken streets soldiers passed in twos and threes, taking little notice of such incidents, careless of where they walked; while from a neighbouring barracks, in the intervals between the shells, there came the tinkle of a piano and the sound of laughter.

"In war," observed the Lieutenant, "all men are fatalists."

Our visit ended in a battery of 75's. These were dexterously concealed in a wide open court, and there was nothing of them visible to our eyes as we turned in at the great gates but the browning grass, and here and there a hole made by some vagrant shell. But presently we descended into a narrow tunnel, and so came to the guns, each of which lay here as scrupulously clean as a dainty woman, in a little chamber of its own. Instead of the gun facing its embrasure fair and square, as in the old fortifications, it hid itself coyly in an angle; beside it in a secluded corner lay its shells; and while one of the gunners slept like a log upon the barrow, another sat with the soap upon his face and a barber at his elbow, unmoved by the sound of the enemy's shells flying overhead.

"Behold our impressionability!" laughed the Lieutenant; "we have acquired, as you see, some of your Northern *sangfroid*."

The Latin peoples have, it seems, learnt this lesson; and

a cool self-possession seems to be the characteristic of the Italian Army, from the General and his staff to the dusty *carabinero* on the road. I came away, indeed, with the happiest impression of a cheery, efficient people; of strong, brave men, who think little of death as they go up to the fighting line; and of many with strong, noble faces, the very image of their Roman ancestors, whom I turned instinctively to look at more than once.

In other days, I will confess here, I have thought of this loved Italy as a land of beggars and priests; of palaces and churches; of a people indolent, easy, artistic; of its officers as rather romantic persons in flowing cloaks that were drawn about them with a dramatic grace; of soldiers who, if they deserved success, had been cheated of it; of many who were, so to speak, the derelicts of life, broken and thrown upon the charity of the world. But to-day I do not know where all these people have gone. There seem to be only young men in Italy: clean-built, clean-shaved, hardy, erect, and as matter-of-fact as our own people. Like our own men, too, they are devoid of the Prussian brutality, and mingle with the rest of their countrymen as simply as ours; and yet there is a certain hardness and air of readiness about them as of men who are bent on some great purpose.

Our visit had been one of the most absorbing interest, yet it was with something of a sense of relief that I found the motor

speeding away from Monfalcone, its falling shells and its ruined homes. It was as though a weight had been lifted, and a feeling amounting to delight swept over me as I saw once again a woman by the wayside, a child upon a doorstep, and labourers busy in the fields. The brutality of war was there at the end of that white road,

by that shattered inn and railway station, in those hard-looking trenches, and in the insensate flight of those shells whose only message was one of destruction; but here were the joy of life and the beauty of the world once more.

It was much to have seen Monfalcone, but more to have left it behind.

UDINE IN WAR TIME.

Udine is a little town hall-marked by Venice. In its square there is a miniature palace of the Doges. Opposite, there is a square tower with two bronze figures striking a bell, as at the gateway of the Merceria; and there are two marble columns, as in the Piazzetta, sustaining the winged Lion of St Marc and a figure of Justice; while the Lion is again to be seen recessed in the walls of the public buildings.

At night, when the streets are but faintly lit by the little blue globes of electric light, and dark shadows lie across the streets and about the corners of the buildings, one might be back in the days when a Doge sat enthroned in Venice and the Procurators of the Republic ruled in Udine; instead of being, as one is, at the headquarters of the Italian army.

At the inn, as one dines in the old-fashioned courtyard, overhead there is a canopy of wistarias, through whose interspaces one can see the swallows wheeling and hear them twittering; and beyond them, high up, the war-planes buzzing and circling in the summer sky.

This evening, they are our friends up there, and we sit at peace; but the enemy's planes are frequent visitors, and Udine has suffered at their hands.

When dinner is over, I go away and sit for a little while under the chestnut-trees by the square outside the gates; and as I sit here in the Sabbath calm, I see the little milliners crossing and recrossing with their handboxes on their arms, the boys at play, and the carts of the peasants entering and leaving the town. I see a funeral procession go by, the white horses with their sky-blue cloths, the priest in his vestments, the candle-bearers and the sexton, and a whole company of girls in white.

It is a bit of the old-world life of Udine, untouched by the events of the hour; and yet, just across there by that big house, where a general officer of one of the Allied Powers lives, there are still traces of the big hole made by an Austrian bomb; of the fragments that were blown into the house, damaging its windows and its walls and nearly killing its occupants; while

in the neighbouring cemetery lie those innocent persons who, happening by a blind chance to be passing at the moment, were killed outright by the explosion.

The Castello stands with a sort of majesty upon the Hill of Attila, four-square, barrack-like, yet touched with the grace of Italy. From this spot, raised by the labour of multitudes to enable him to gaze upon the spectacle, the great Barbarian is said to have looked upon the burning of Aquileia. His successors would, no doubt, be glad to emulate him.

But to-day it is a beautiful world that encloses me as I stand here and look about me. I can see the Friulian Mountains, the Carnic Alps, the sea afar off, and the Tower of Aquileia. I see a landscape of light blue touched with silver, of bright green fields and red roofs, with here and there a solemn cypress-tree, bathed in the summer sunlight, radiant and joyous; and as I look upon it through the great windows of the Hall of the Castle, and from the Venetian balcony, the air is laden with the engulfing music of the guns.

Overhead I hear the droning whirr of the great Capronis as they circle and watch over the safety of the city, and against the skyline I can trace the muzzles of the defending guns.

In spite of its tranquil beauty, Udine is given up into the hands of war. The museums, the Castello, are closed, and their pictures con-

cealed in the vaults of the mighty building. . . .

It is grey dawn when I am awakened from deep sleep by the ringing of all the bells of Udine and the loud blast of a syren that would have roused the Seven Sleepers.

It is that early hour when the darkness of night is passing away, when there is light to see, but the world is still wrapped in sleep; when the tiger springs on his prey, the Afghan launches his attack; when the marauding aeroplane looks for a chance of flinging its bombs upon some city or place of war.

I descend to the basement to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, and find a great company assembled there in its night-clothes, including the Countess de V. and her daughter, Captain M. of the Italian Cavalry, who is attached to the Russian Mission during its travels in Italy, and the maids and porters of the hotel. An Austrian plane has been signalled, and Udine is advised to betake itself to its cellars and basements.

After a while the bells cease ringing and the syren its naval blare, and in their place the grinding music of the Capronis fills the air as they circle in the dim heaven in search of the enemy.

Then a bell rings out announcing that all danger is over, and Udine turns on its side and sleeps again.

At eight o'clock I go down to breakfast in the little *al fresco* courtyard, where the wistarias make a canopy over the head of the visitors to the

hotel as they feed, and I am just starting off on my rolls and hot coffee and a plate of peach jam, when again the morning peace is broken by the sudden blare of the syren and the ringing of the Cathedral bells.

Some run out to look up into the sky, where an Austrian plane rides high above the city like a bird of prey; while the more timid, including the maids, the porters, and an old peasant from the country with a great black hat upon his head and a flowing white beard, cluster about the inner doorways like a covey of frightened partridge. It is a little scene for a painter.

Then the guns begin to fire, and the air is loud with their repeated detonations.

"Bang—bang—bang," they go, and I begin to wonder where their bullets and the fragments of their shells will find a resting-place, for everything must come to earth somewhere.

Overhead there still rides high the Austrian plane, seemingly unconcerned, while now the grind of the Capronis is added to the other sounds; and so I carry my breakfast into a safer place and resume operations on the peach jam and the rolls and the hot coffee—a little less hot now from this interruption.

And then as the Capronis rise high into the air and gather impetus, the Austrian withdraws and passes away out of sight, and the incident comes to an end.

The barber in his shop winks an experienced eye and says,

"The Russians; it was to pay them a visit."

The market-place fills with the farmers of the countryside; and men go to and fro, fingering the yellow corn, appraising the lowing stock.

Udine is once more bent upon the business of its everyday life.

Such incidents were not infrequent; and I heard of a lieutenant in a fourth-floor room who slept peacefully through it all, untroubled by war's alarms. For my part, I could never resist the fascination of the sky; and one morning as I was starting for Vicenza I saw a beautiful sight.

It was about seven o'clock, and the ringing of the bells and the hooting of the syren announced the arrival of an Austrian plane. I went downstairs and into the square of the XXth September, and looked up into the sky above me.

It was very blue, of the colour that one describes as electric, and only here and there a wisp of cloud floated across it. And then there appeared in the flawless dome overhead a puff of white cloud, which swelled and descended, and then another and another, until there were presently seven, like a new sort of constellation; and then there was something in the midst of them, like a moth with the light on her wings, or it might be a piece of thistle-down caught by the sun, and it began to float and as it were melt away into the empyrean.

This was the Austrian plane, flying at great speed far up above in the spaces of heaven.

Two Capronis were following it in swift pursuit, and these also faded and vanished from sight.

Then others came and circled angrily over the town, buzzing as they flew, like hornets about a nest; and once more the world returned to its customary avocations.

SICK AND WOUNDED.

Up there at the front, the overwhelming instinct of every man is to kill. But just a little behind it there springs up the instinct to save life, to ease the pain of the dying and wounded; to succour with a gentle hand even the vanquished enemy. Men up there will even die to save another's life. It is a strange contrast—part of that dual nature which is the tragedy and the hope of the world; and it is hard to say where and when one begins and the other ends.

One morning I went, with some shrinking, to look upon the wounded in the hospitals of Udine.

There was the hospital for those wounded in the face. In one room of it there was a sort of jaw factory, where hundreds of plaster casts made from the jaws of each patient lay in rows upon the shelves, and parts that had been blown or shot away were being made to replace them. Many a poor fellow was evidently disfigured for life; some—including an Austrian from Bosnia—were visibly in pain and distress, and ate with the greatest difficulty from the bowls of food before them. . . .

In another ward there were those who had been frost-bitten, and some of these had

lost the greater part of their feet. Over the lower ends of their beds were small hooped frames to relieve their maimed limbs from the pressure of the bedclothes.

The long rows of white beds filled each room from end to end, and in each room there were nurses of the Red Cross—Italian ladies who were giving their voluntary services to their country. One could see what a comfort their presence was to these wounded and broken men.

We passed by the operating-rooms where the surgeons were at work in their white robes and aprons; by the disinfecting-rooms and the bathrooms, into which those fresh from the trenches are taken on entering the hospital, and through the kitchens, where the pleasant odour of warm and well-cooked food filled the air; and so through the big Hall where some wounded officers were seated, and into the open street and the everyday life of Udine.

The Medical Officer in charge, gravely courteous and kind to the last, saw us out, and the door closed on him and his hospital of six hundred wounded men; a little empty just now, for the tide of battle had rolled away to another part of the long Italian front.

Upon another occasion I spent an hour with Colonel Santucci, the P.M.O., at his big hospital for 3,000 men, outside the town. The little Colonel took a fatherly pride in this thing of his creation; for a few months ago it was a Cavalry Barrack, and I could not but appreciate the adaptability and skill with which he had turned it into a modern hospital. What were once horse stables were now immaculate bedrooms, and the feeding-troughs with white lids on them were now as white as snow.

"Pure air, abundant water, absolute cleanliness—these," he said, "are my three remedies; the rest I leave to Nature, and she knows her business. But you will see also that we have the very latest, the most modern appliances. Here, at each end of each ward, is an X-ray installation, the most perfect that money can buy. Look at those transparencies there against the light; they will tell you of the strange places into which the bullets penetrate.

"And here is our Bacteriological Section. Every patient is examined here, and you see our books show that over 15,000 have been tested in this way. No man can leave this hospital and carry disease abroad with him into the country. This was especially necessary when cholera and typhus prevailed in the Austrian armies.

"And look at my steam laundry; it is a great instru-

ment of the cleanliness at which we aim; and at the trees—see how they are growing up. But a year ago this was a bare barrack-yard. Gardens, trees, flowers—everywhere, everywhere; I love them; they are great healers. They rejoice the eyes and cheer the hearts of our men."

The Colonel, it was clear, had an inclusive mind; and his hospital was a triumph of forethought, sequence, and skill. It was all so good, and so simple.

As we came away I saw a man lying ill of typhus in the Infectious Ward. Beside him sat, one on each side of his bed, his father and mother; typical old peasants—silent, enduring, patient.

"Ah! poor things. I let them come—not regular, perhaps,—I had not the heart to turn them away. I have given them a room here, and they have food from the hospital kitchen. They are happy; and their son—he will recover."

You cannot keep the human touch out of Italy.

"Always flowers," he murmured, "always trees, gardens—happiness, *and* cleanliness. They soon get well, and when they go back to their homes after this war they will never be dirty again, as they were. It will be a new Italy."

And so it will: a great Italy, with its soul bathed in the waters of sacrifice, and its vision purified by endeavour.

ODYSSEUS.

(To be continued.)

COUNTERPLOTS.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

THE pre-war taste in fiction being dead (it has been buried by several distinguished publishers), and quite a new vogue having appeared, the very important question arises: What are authors to do with their stock of 1916 and 1917 planings and plottings? As these have been the result of vast intellectual labour, it would clearly be a lamentable waste of brain produce to allow them to remain upon their shelves. A few authors who have been so judicious as to consult the present writer have also been so kind as to let him publish the following practical solutions of this vital problem, in order that as many deserving writers as possible may benefit by the demonstration.

I. THE EMANCIPATION OF MAGDALEN.

The design for this romance was of a pattern very fashionable till quite lately. Magdalen, a spirited young lady of nineteen, beautiful and talented, was condemned by the caprice of fate to possess an altogether uncongenial, and indeed, one may say, an unworthy family circle. Her father, Colonel Warpheed, was of the typical, prejudiced, bigoted, "damn-it-miss-am-I-not-your-father," military species; a really horrid fellow as conceived by the talented young authoress. Magdalen's brother Randolph was as rakish and selfish as young men of twenty-one generally are (they were coming in for terrible castigation in this promising novel); while her sister Martha exhibited all the defects of a thoroughly domesticated woman.

Conceive of the effective scene it would have made

(before the war) when the Colonel discovers the MS. of twelve chapters of a novel in his daughter Magdalen's handwriting, entitled 'The Rise of Judith,' and actually depicting what that Philistine warrior has always been in the habit of regarding as a lady's fall!

With flashing insight and startling power Magdalen has uttered the cry of what was lately the New, and is now (unhappily for our authoress) the Out-of-Date Woman. Emancipation, freedom from the stifling conventionalities of society, liberty to lead a woman's life as a woman dashed well wants to lead it; these are the soul-shaking, Philistine-shocking demands of Magdalen uttered in her MS. novel.

Rising like a skylark to the occasion, Magdalen debates the problems of sex with her

scandalised family through five long and sparkling chapters. The MS. novel is snatched from her hands and burnt by her outraged father, to the accompaniment of a flood of conventional arguments which our gifted authoress would have made to sound very thin indeed. Randolph, who is actually engaged at that moment in an intrigue with the housemaid (our authoress spares man none of his failings), expounds the same conventional morality with disgusting hypocrisy. Martha is cold, supercilious, and unforgiving — a typical virtuous woman, in fact. Naturally, Magdalen comes out of the five-chapter controversy with flying colours. Equally naturally, her unspeakable parent sends her under escort to her strong-minded Aunt Seraphina to be dressed down still more drastically.

And now we get the real note of genius struck. Aunt Seraphina turns out to be a disillusioned virgin. Instead of dressing down her erring niece, she expounds for three chapters views which are an advance even on Magdalen's breezy opinions.

"Drain the cup of life to the dregs, my dear!" she cries. "Whatever you do, avoid the loveless, stunted destiny of your unhappy aunt!"

Dramatically the scene changes. The intoxicated reader is carried straight into the midst of the most Bohemian Bohemia ever conceived by a young lady who has only once been in a studio,

but who has — which is far more important — the divine gift of imagination. The central figure is "Quis," the nickname of the brilliant woman painter whose work is the delight of the truly artistic and the scandal of the Philistines. Red-haired, green-eyed, sylph-like in form, and quite irresistible by any man who has a wife to desert, this delightful creature becomes the bosom friend of the now notorious Magdalen. For Magdalen has re-written her novel, exhibiting several times more flashing insight and startling power than she exhibited the first time. It is, of course, taboo at all the libraries and bookstalls, and has even been preached at by the Bishop of London, so that she has become a rival to Quis herself.

Amidst the clouds of scented tobacco-smoke and the fumes of alcohol, veronal, and other stimulating essences which float through the studio of Quis and the flat of Magdalen, the reader soon discovers a magnificent male figure which is clearly destined to play a worthy part in this drama. This is "To-to," pet name of the famous morphomaniac sculptor, a gentleman (if our authoress will forgive me for applying this perhaps rather inappropriate term to such a type of the New Man—as he was three short years ago) whose relations to Quis are more than hinted at.

To-to turns his alluring eyes to Magdalen, who likewise turns hers to him, and in a series of volcanic chapters we see Quis left with a bullet

through her brain (through her head anyhow, though what it encountered there our authoress does not specifically say). Meanwhile the enraptured Magdalen and To-to are enjoying the greatest felicity in a Riviera hotel, when lo! another equally magnificent male appears.

This is Poppherintski, the world-famous musician, as hairy a genius as ever strummed. It takes Magdalen but four passionate chapters to elope with this latest lion, and then the *dénouement* positively rushes to meet the enthralled reader.

While enjoying a beautiful prospect of the sunrise from the top of Mont Blanc (whither they have gone for symbolical purposes) the happy couple learn the news of To-to's death from an overdose of morphia. Two days later the distraught Colonel Warpheend receives a note dated from Mont Blanc, informing him that Magdalen and Poppherintski propose to embark on an avalanche which is just due to descend upon the unsuspecting inhabitants of the valleys 14,000 feet below.

With this truly inspired piece of symbolism the tale would have concluded, had it ever been written. But alas! the War came, and a few slight alterations seem quite essential. In the first place, the title is easily altered into—

The Precipitation of Magstein.

As for the plot, the "Emancipation" may almost be said to convert itself into a first-

class Air Drama. Magdalen of course becomes Magstein, a sinister figure of mysterious origin, at present acting as butler to Colonel Warpheend. The gallant Colonel will remain as before, except that his characteristics will have other adjectives applied to them. This determined, single-minded, martial gentleman is the patriotic inventor of a new anti-aircraft gun, and his confidant and assistant is of course his talented butler Magstein.

Another fresh selection of adjectives (which in the English language are very numerous) leaves Martha a charming, blushing, and yet delightfully competent V.A.D., employed in the hospital of which her Aunt Seraphina is matron. As for Randolph, he need merely be converted into a first cousin whose youthful follies were laid aside when he accepted a commission in "K 1." (As a brother he could not of course marry Martha at the end.)

The first incidents are dramatic and mysterious enough. The gun is tampered with several times, and the Colonel is dashed and hanged if he can guess who the unscrupulous scoundrel can be. Magstein professes to be equally puzzled, and for a thrilling chapter or two misleads all but the most sophisticated readers into thinking Randolph is the criminal. But the reader's eyes begin to open when he finds this sinister butler actually daring to make love to the beautiful Martha, and dis-

closing a dark hint that he is not what he seems. In fact, he drops distinct allusions to estates in East Prussia and shares in Krupps. Martha of course fails altogether to understand these allusions, but she rejects his unworthy advances with the scorn they deserve.

And now the drama and mysteriousness deepen with a vengeance. Magstein mysteriously disappears, leaving the Colonel with the dark suspicion that the secret plans of his gun have been photographed. Of course he is too guileless and honourable to suspect his own faithful butler (whom he mourns as probably murdered), but the reader exclaims "Aha!" several times about this point.

Still following closely on the lines of the "Emancipation," the scene now changes to Bohemian London, only in this version it is a German Club in Soho which we visit, where Quis is a marine landscape painter, with a strange partiality for setting up her easel in the neighbourhood of naval bases, To-to is but a thin disguise for the mysterious Magstein, and Popherintski is a renegade Slav who does some very neat things in the way of stealing documents from the Russian Embassy.

In place of the Riviera hotel we next get a coast defence station on the shores of England. The gun stands there in the dim and eerie dusk pointing skywards defiantly, and beside it on the sward lies its brave inventor—

drugged! Two masked shapes appear dragging a third. From the moans of the third we learn with horror that she is no other than the unfortunate Martha. The other two we know by instinct (even before they began to whisper "Gott strafe!") must be Magstein and Popherintski.

They raise the pinioned girl skywards; they heave her downwards; she disappears down the muzzle of the gun! Then Magstein springs on a parachute and ascends to join a Zeppelin. This is the end of a chapter.

The next chapter opens with one of the most exciting moments imaginable. The heroic Colonel, shaking off the fumes of the drug, staggers to the gun and aims it by the light of the moon at the whizzing Zeppelin overhead. The fate of England hangs upon this one shot, and the reader knows that no shell, but the fair Martha herself, is in the breech. What is going to happen? (This is the nearest approach to a problem permitted in the new fiction.)

Bang! By the rays of the moon the delighted reader perceives not Martha but Popherintski speeding heavenwards! Being well soaked in petrol, he presently bursts into flames. He hits the Zepp a sickening smack, and the next moment, with a terrific explosion, the gigantic airship hurtles earthwards, the form of its pirate captain heading the descent. It is Magstein—he has been precipitated!

The explanation is as simple as it is ingenious. Randolph and Aunt Seraphina, noticing a faint sound of sobbing in the gun, have rescued Martha and substituted Popherintski, who, unfortunately for himself, was discovered gloating in the vicinity. The petrol Aunt Seraphina was carrying to remove stains from bandages, so that everything is accounted for perfectly natur-

ally. And, needless to say, on the finger of Martha gleams an engagement ring.

To complete the close parallel between the Emancipation and the Precipitation, the latter incident would be retained, except that the news which gladdens the gallant Colonel's eyes is the intimation that he is now a K.C.B. and Randolph a D.S.O.

II. CHARLOTTE CHOOSES AGAIN.

This novel would have made a decided stir in 1913; not exactly a sensation, since the authoress is far too refined for anything in the nature of a splash, but undoubtedly a great many earnest people would have talked about it, and everybody who affected taste would certainly have had to know the author's name.

Charlotte was the wife of Ralph, and Alexis was the other man. Both were genuinely and at moments passionately in love with her. Both (so far as can be judged from certain specimens of their conversation jotted down by the gifted authoress) were equally addicted to making very long speeches on much the same topics. In fact, there seems to have been nothing to distinguish them except that Ralph was going to smoke a pipe (if the novel had been written), while Alexis was going to confine himself to cigarettes.

Charlotte's first choice had

been Ralph. She had even gone the length of marrying him before she met Alexis; but what of that? An up-to-date (meaning A.D. 1913) lady was no snivelling monogamist. The two gentlemen were practically twins, so Charlotte deliberately resolved to choose again with an open mind.

The plot of this high-class novel is a little difficult to give in detail, since it consisted half of conversations and half of subtle analyses of these three interesting people's states of mind. The principal incident, which was going to occupy about two-thirds of the book, is this.

At 11 P.M. one evening Alexis, smoking a cigarette, arrives at the Belgravian abode of Charlotte (all the characters move in the best society), having discovered in the course of a forty-page conversation that Ralph was going to smoke his pipe somewhere else. Thirty pages of subtle analysis have left Charlotte

a little limp, and looked at last within her bedroom.

Alexis knocks on the door (perhaps the most exciting episode in the whole romance). Through the panels Charlotte replies, and thereafter each breathes several sentences, which, with the aid of minute descriptions of their sensations, occupy a long and what would have been a very well-written chapter. Finally Alexis is bidden to wait on the stairs for her decision.

He waits till 4 A.M., while the gifted authoress analyses in turn her sensations and then his emotions, and then her emotions and then his sensations. As the clock strikes four the front door is heard to open, and Alexis, cigarette 'twixt fingers, glides away.

Ralph has returned. No secret is made of this, as the plot is not of the kind that depends on secrets. He ascends the stairs, analysed by the authoress upon every step. He knocks at the door in a very nice gentlemanly way, for he quite realised that being a husband conferred no privileges in 1913. Again sentences are breathed, and again the gentleman is told to wait upon the stairs for the lady's choice.

Pipe 'tween teeth, he waits while a new series of analyses are performed. At last, at 9 A.M., he has breakfast. The decision, in short, has been postponed.

Next morning Charlotte discusses her night's work with her bosom friend Sylvia, and

in the course of the next few days Sylvia discusses it in turn with Ralph and Alexis.

And which twin does she choose in the end? That is the most artistic touch in this artistic work. The reader is left in doubt till the very last line, and then he gets just one little hint, so subtle and so ambiguous that half the readers will guess pipe and half cigarette.

There is no doubt that this plot requires very delicate and yet rather firm handling to convert it into the type of romance that has come into vogue of late. The title, fortunately, presents no great difficulty. In fact, a comparatively slight change gives us—

Commander Careless, R.N.

The next step needs only to be boldly made, and it is accomplished in practically a twinkling. If we frankly convert the three chief characters into Midshipmen Careless, Dashett, and Loosun, the terror alike of their Commanding Officer and of the German Navy, we can go ahead with what it is now permissible to call a spanking breeze on our counter.

The high-spirited escapades of their earlier careers will occupy the first six chapters very nicely. Marlinspike in hand, the reckless yet lovable trio hold up their enemy the flag-lieutenant, and, having shaved half his head and removed his boots, make him perform the goose-step round the quarter-deck to the delight of the cheering blue-

jackets. They playfully fire off the 12-inch guns of the forward turret just as the chaplain is reading prayers. They pour boiling water down the speaking-tube, having first secured the presence of the captain at the other end. And as a final touch of roguishness they alter the range-finder, whereby a salvo is neatly landed on the lawn of the admiral's official residence as he is in the act of entertaining royalty.

But now the drums of war begin to beat, and with a ring of genuine affection in his voice and a crystal drop sparkling in his eye, the bearded bo'sun confides to the admiral his opinion that "these three blinkin' gents is goin' ter give Billy what Ho, and a little bit over!"

The admiral, a thorough good sort at heart, in spite of his temporary annoyance at the salvo episode, cordially agrees.

"James," says he, "between ourselves, I give you the straight tip—Careless will be commanding the Grand Fleet before this war is six months older, and we'll have to build fresh navies for the other two."

Nor does our hero belie the confidence in him expressed by these two experienced critics. Having secured the steam pinnace and a couple of 6-inch guns by a judicious mixture of effrontery and violence, Careless sets out for Heligoland. Observing *en route* a hostile submarine in the act of sinking a passenger liner,

he ports his helm, rams the submarine, and rescues the only surviving passenger—a beautiful girl, Gwendolen by name and heroine by nature.

To disguise Gwendolen in the costume of a mariner (discovered among the wreckage) is the work but of an instant, and dropping a Zepp and a Fokker with a neat right and left from their 6-inch guns on the way, the daring couple draw ever nearer the hostile coast. A pursuing battle cruiser is prettily drawn over a mine-field improvised by the ingenious Careless out of empty ginger-beer bottles and some nitro-glycerine which he luckily discovers in the stern-sheets. She goes down in ten seconds; and though the promptings of humanity almost induce them to delay their voyage and rescue the crew, they decide, on second thoughts, that duty comes first—and on they race.

Presently the German flagship heaves in sight, and describing themselves as Captain O'Hooligan and Lieutenant Brady of the Irish Republican Navy, the enterprising voyagers are welcomed with open arms by a stern officer whose conspicuous whiskers and ferocious conversation will leave the intelligent reader in no doubt that he is in the presence of Grand Admiral von Tirpitz.

This bloodthirsty but credulous Teuton is so impressed with Captain O'Hooligan's conversation and sentiments that he readily allows him to take the wheel and steer the

Hindenburg straight into the arms of a British squadron. The action which ensues (and which should make one of the best chapters in the book) is chiefly remarkable for the extraordinary series of humorous incidents which occur on board the doomed *Hindenburg*. Captain O'Hooligan and his capable lieutenant load the guns with lager beer, water the furnaces, charge the torpedo-tubes with the Hunnish officers' umbrellas, and finally persuade Admiral von Tirpitz and his crew to take refuge in the foe'sle while they negotiate an honourable surrender.

Foremost in welcoming Careless and Gwendolen on the decks of the British flagship are Dashett and Loosun, who, it seems, have been chiefly instrumental in conducting the battle so skilfully, and all who read this convincing tale of the sea will be agreed that three Victoria Crosses were never better bestowed.

And now comes an opportunity for some very pretty sentiment. The incident of Charlotte and her admirers breathing through the locked door can be adapted excellently by merely rolling the admirers into one, and either removing the door or keeping it unlocked. The breathing also can be easily altered. We are thus left with Commander Careless (as of course he has now become, pending his reaching Admiral's rank) and the beautiful and heroic Gwendolen sharing an oilskin on the bridge of H.M.S. *Indestructible*, both madly in love and both

misunderstanding everything the other says.

"I have one at home awaiting me," murmurs Gwendolen (meaning of course her aged parent, and secretly anticipating the joy of that veteran when she introduces Commander Careless).

"She loves another!" says the impetuous Commander to himself. "Farewell fond hopes!"

By the aid of such ingenious misunderstandings the love interest can be carried right on to the last chapter in a series of thoroughly wholesome episodes. And meantime the youthful Commander is performing further prodigies of valour, and performing them moreover in that delightfully unpremeditated, accidental sort of spirit which the millions who have never met a naval officer in the flesh will yet instantly recognise as so like the gallant fellows.

Plunging overboard, for instance, for his morning swim somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Dogger Bank, Commander Careless suddenly discovers himself in the midst of a mine-field. Of course such a dashing blade would never dream of looking for mine-fields off the Dogger Bank any more than he would dream of looking for burglars under his bed, but having found one he does the right thing with it by sheer instinct. Picking up the insidious dangers one by one, and just showing enough caution to hold them at arm's-length, he bursts them in succession on the taffrail of the

Nil Desperandum (the super-Dreadnought which he now commands), and then he goes on swimming just as though nothing had happened, and whistling carelessly "It's a way we have in the Navy!" as he breasts the rollers.

Of course he swims a little too far, as daring captains of super-Dreadnoughts are so apt to do, and losing sight of his ship discovers himself presently in the midst of a fleet of hostile transports heading for the Norfolk coast. But to detail

their swift and terrible fate at his hands would be superfluous in what after all is only the outline of a novel. In fact it is merely necessary to add that the forecasts of the Admiral and bo'sun were more than justified, and that a very happy adaptation of the questioning note at the end of "Charlotte" may be secured by leaving the reader a trifle doubtful whether our hero is going to end as the Earl of Heligoland or Viscount Dogger Bank.

III. THE FLY IN THE OINTMENT.

This story would have been considered one of the most artistic gems its author ever fashioned. It is a beautiful conception, rather of the Arun Lily type of loveliness, and yet with a sort of caramel custard consistency. For choice, it should have been read in a Turkish bath by ladies and gentlemen with season tickets, for it would have been rather a long book to devour in the course of one perspiration.

Humphrey is a contemplative gentleman of 51, wealthy, leisured, artistic, and refined absolutely to the limit. He is exactly the man one would have expected to live very happily in a good library with a conservatory opening off it and a croquet lawn beyond, but our author is not one of the thoughtless sparks who deal in happiness. He has given the gentle Humphrey a fly in his ointment; in fact, one may almost say a bluebottle.

Humphrey is haunted! And he is haunted by no vulgar ghost or even by crude remorse, but by something much more subtly terrible—a conscience.

He has a brother called Geoffrey, aged 49, also wealthy, also leisured, also artistic, also refined almost to a shadow, and haunted by another conscience. These two graceful creatures suffer in silence for years and years. They have suffered, dumb and uncomplaining, ever since their gentle careers at Oxford were rudely interrupted by that dreadful examination called Moderations, which simply refused to be passed by them. They tried again and again, but their consciences kept pricking them, and that made their eyes wander out of the window, and so they had to go mournfully down.

The trouble, in fact, had begun long before that event. Their careers at Eton were likewise brutally interrupted

by the impossibility of getting past the lower fourth. The consciences pricked, the eyes wandered, and when they stood five feet ten and were nearly ready for shaving, they were told they were too old to stay any longer in the lower fourth, and so they gently drifted away.

The most charming descriptions of their lovely houses and fragrant gardens and beautiful pictures would have been given by our author, who is an artist if ever there was one. But, alas for him! times have changed and paper is precious, and publishers say that nobody admires dreamy men nowadays; while the only questions people ask their consciences are either, Has it an objection? or, Are YOU motoring for pleasure?

There actually was a little plot, however, even in the romance of Humphrey and Geoffrey. Something — a little bird or a pink flower or a zephyr, something suitable anyhow—rouses them at last to a state almost of revolt. Probably their consciences have been overdoing the haunting stunt. Anyhow, what our gifted author proposed was a series of descriptive passages, growing purpler and purpler all the time, showing how the weather and the trees and the people they saw out of the windows all conspired to drive them to the verge of desperation. The brothers and a crisis are clearly approaching one another, though not of course hurriedly and violently, but delicately and slowly, like two dogs, stiff from nose to tail,

with glassy eyes and rumbling formidably, as they draw step by step nearer the dramatic moment when the stern process of smelling begins.

The actual moment in the brothers' case (which we should have reached about page 300) is when, upon a never-to-be-forgotten morning, Humphrey treads on a beetle, and squash! goes the innocent insect. Conscience-smitten and horror-struck, Humphrey collapses into his arm-chair, and all the beautiful world seems black.

Geoffrey is equally upset. He has noticed the beetle shortly after breakfast, and failed to warn his brother (who he knows was wearing his heaviest boots). "I am equally guilty!" he cries, and so acute are their anguishes that an author who liked strong effects would probably make them open a drawer with a couple of pistols in it.

But neither the author of 'The Fly in the Ointment' nor his charming creations are of that type. Humphrey and Geoffrey would as soon think of investing in oleographs as pistols. They are non-smokers, non-drinkers, non-killers; non-everything, in fact, except haunted, and now they actually begin to be determined to be non-haunted too. The worms, in short, decide to turn.

Accordingly they split a glass of sherry and run twice round the lawn to rouse their fighting blood, treading the daisies under foot with desperate hardihood. For a mad moment they feel a curious sensation, almost as though

their backbones were beginning to grow. But, alas! this extraordinary feeling frightens them. Reflection sets in. They begin to wonder whether they can possibly keep this up, whether really nice men ought to keep it up, and a lot of other things.

And then the shadows begin to deepen. Nature conspires to help the hunters and depress the brothers. Autumn leaves fall and evenings grow chilly and vapours arise on the river, and that curious feeling in their backs fades away. One beautiful chapter follows another, quivering with mild emotion, till at last the book ends simply by arriving at the last page—a delicate piece of symbolism indicating the fate of Humphrey and Geoffrey.

In reconstructing this graceful plot it is quite clear that several new episodes will have to be invented. At the same time the general outline is first-class material. The nature of this new tale is inevitable, and is suggested very happily by the title

The Spy's Disappointment.

Sir Humphrey is of course head of the Secret Service Bureau. Geoffrey is his right-hand man, a skilled and daring investigator, disguised at present as a Conscientious Objector, who delivers treasonable sermons at the Chapel of the Socio-Atheistical Brotherhood in Balham. As long as he is acting in this capacity, the character of the original Geoffrey will fit him like a glove, and even Sir Humphrey might

behave at times like the original Humphrey to throw German agents off the scent.

The two haunting consciences are represented by Watson, the confidential clerk of Sir Humphrey—the last man his acute chief suspects; and by P.C. Brown, the constable on the beat where the Chapel is situated. And here again, who would suspect a bobby of artfulness?

A consciousness of being shadowed afflicts both the head of the Secret Service Bureau and the daring investigator. They decide upon a thorough disguise (this, of course, is one of the new incidents). Even Geoffrey's striking impersonation of an Objector has evidently been insufficient, but they mean to make no mistake about it this time. In fact, we have practically the same situation as in "The Fly," only it is rather differently handled.

Aided and abetted by Watson and P.C. Brown—whom not even the reader suspects to begin with—they set about the task of throwing their invisible enemies off the scent. Thrill follows thrill. Sir Humphrey appears as a wounded sergeant of the Coldstream Guards, an octogenarian bookseller in Charing Cross Road, a one-legged liftman on the Piccadilly Tube, and a Lady-in-Waiting at Buckingham Palace. Each time his disguise is so perfect that he deceives his oldest friends, yet each time a desperate and utterly mysterious attempt is made to put an end to his life and abstract the

confidential plans of the latest super-Dreadnought and the draft of the secret treaty with Abyssinia, which, like all experienced heads of the Secret Service, he carries in a tin-lined hollow in the heel of his left boot.

The attempted assassinations are positively hair-raising. An elderly clergyman stands the sergeant a small Scotch flavoured with Prussic acid; an innocent-looking nursemaid hands the bookseller three gun-cotton pennies, with a time-fuse concealed in the King's head, in change for a shilling; the liftman is fired at for five minutes by an automatic revolver concealed in a bag of golf clubs; and the Lady-in-Waiting is nearly crushed by the mysterious collapse of the Marble Arch. By a miracle Sir Humphrey escapes with his life, but unfortunately only to go to sleep for two minutes on a bench in Hyde Park and wake up to find the hollow heel neatly removed and a dummy substituted. He has lost his confidential papers!

Geoffrey, carrying equally important documents equally ingeniously concealed, has equally exciting adventures. Whether disguised as a paralytic newspaper vendor, as a stockbroker with blue spectacles, or as the statue of Achilles in Hyde Park, he is invariably handed arsenical sandwiches, or fired at by an air-gun with a poisoned bullet, or hit with extraordinary violence by a life-preserver concealed in a bouquet of daffodils. This last effort brings down

the statue, and before he can disentangle himself from his toga, Achilles loses his documents.

And now we come to another incident which was not actually in "The Fly," but can quite legitimately be added. The scene changes to Potsdam, and we see the Kaiser and Crown Prince, surrounded by their glittering suite, waiting to receive the two famous spies, Tinkeldorf and Grossermann, who have just returned from England with an extraordinary haul of confidential documents. A box of iron crosses is on the table, the band plays "Deutschland über Alles," and fireworks explode continuously in the decorated streets.

Amidst tumultuous cheers the spies approach the Palace, and the reader is astounded to recognise in the perfidious pair Watson, the confidential clerk, and Brown, the Balham constable! They reach the Palace, the gates are thrown open by stalwart guardsmen, and with their pockets bulging with the captured documents, Tinkeldorf and Grossermann pass in to meet their Emperor.

Meantime the Kaiser and the Crown Prince are holding confidential and highly illuminating converse with Generals Hindenburg, Mackensen, and Kluck (these are all the names the general reader is likely to recognise, but more can of course be added if strict verisimilitude be desired). Then they dismiss their Generals and their glittering suite, and await by themselves the arrival of the spies. As they wait they

exchange a very curious look. The left eyelid of each seems in fact to quiver.

The scene again changes to the outside of the Palace, where a few minutes later the Kaiser and Crown Prince appear, *their* pockets now bulging with the documents. Summoning their suite, they spring into their motor-car and dash headlong for the Front. Arriving in the firing line, they dismiss their suite on the pretext of desiring a little private conversation,

Then over the parapet they hop and double for the British trenches.

And then the mystified reader reaps his reward. Off go the German uniforms, and, instead of the Kaiser and Crown Prince, Sir Humphrey and his faithful Geoffrey stand revealed!

As for the spies, when they have worn their iron crosses for half an hour they find that two can play at the gun-cotton and time-fuse game. Hence the title of this tale.

IV. SARAH SIMPSON OF THE SLUMS.

There would have been no flies on this novel. If the metaphor be not too poetical for a serious literary essay, it was going to be a bean-feast of Slices of Life. Such slices were very popular a few years ago. Whether they had a vast sale, Heaven and their publishers alone know; but the intellectual gentlemen in loose hair who flourished in large quantities at that time devoured them as eagerly as certain other gentlemen in loose hair devour nuts, and kept on calling for more. In fact, they solemnly declared that no life *was* life except what was contained in these slices, just as other experts say that no buns are really bath except Bath Buns.

Sarah Simpson lived her uneventful life in an insani-tary quarter of the most un-interesting town in England. She was quite plain, and consequently very pessimistic.

Taking full advantage of this flying start, she secured a sister called Jane, who was nearly as plain and even worse tempered; also a peculiarly offensive father called Dad; and finally a knock-kneed, pimple-nosed follower called Tom — absolutely *the* limit. Thus equipped, she set about her task of damp-ing the spirits of the public.

Sarah is introduced to the reader (this booty having been collected even before the story opens) in the act of cooking the family dinner at Number 3 Cauliflower Court, the dreari-est alley in Europe, selected by Sarah for her residence probably in the course of the same successful expedition which yielded Dad, and Tom, and Jane. She peels the potatoes for several pages, and then boils them for several more. Enter Tom.

"Hullo!" says he, and contributes one or two more remarks to the same effect.

"Hullo yourself!" says she, rising to the occasion.

"Cooking the usual mess," observes Tom.

"Yus," says Sarah.

Enter Dad, quite drunk, and exit Tom, just in time to avoid being kicked out (for Dad has his own prejudices). And now we have a long pause while all the things Dad smells of are described, and a brief list of his previous convictions given as a kind of extra guarantee that we are enjoying the real stuff.

Among Dad's virtues is economy. He allows Sarah a penny a month as pin-money. But she knows how to wait. She saves up her allowance for sixteen years and buys a real rabbit necklet with the head on and glass eyes. The story grows very powerful about the period when the rabbit arrives, and Sarah goes to a music-hall with it and Tom. Tom is smitten almost on the verge of matrimony. But no such felicity is allowed in slices of life. Tragedy looms.

Dad perceives the effect of the rabbit on Tom, and as he loathes Tom worse than water, and is very artful when sober and very violent when drunk, he purloins the rabbit and knocks Sarah down whenever she expostulates. And so Tom drifts away and takes up with Mary, a lady from a neighbouring slum.

The quarrels of Sarah and Jane, and Jane's affairs with a duplicate of Tom called John, then absorb the reader's interest up to about page 480,

when Dad chokes over a fish bone and dies.

Dad's funeral is then very minutely described for the benefit of any readers who still remain too cheerful. The sad ceremony is performed on a very wet day, which puts the finishing touch to the recovered rabbit, and accordingly to Sarah's last chance of happiness (otherwise the whole story might have been spoilt). John gets very drunk, and Jane is more quarrelsome than usual, and Tom is run over by the hearse, which brings Mary likewise into the right humour for enjoying funerals,—which is particularly necessary since there is every chance of another as soon as the author has time to make Tom die in a sufficiently prolonged and lugubrious fashion.

At this point the author had left the end an open question. He was going to finish it, he said, according to the mood he was in after visiting the Chamber of Horrors on an empty stomach, so as to get it absolutely right. One alternative was that Jane should next find the fish bone and choke over it too, and Sarah be charged with her murder, and either be hanged or die of something infectious on the way to the scaffold. But this, as the author frankly confessed, is open to the objection of being rather too exciting an end.

A quieter conclusion would be to finish with Sarah and Jane in the same ward of the same workhouse—so that they could go on quarrelling for

years after the story had stopped; while John should be confined either in a neighbouring jail or an adjacent inebriates' home.

Yet another end would be simply to stop the book after the funeral and leave the depressed reader to imagine the worst for himself. This would certainly have been styled very artistic by the lovers of this style of fiction.

There was also another title suggested to the author by a fellow-enthusiast: "Are we downhearted? Yes!" Our author thought it was good but sounded perhaps a little too popular, and he was still considering the question when he enlisted. Since then, however, he has quite abandoned Sarah, and now expresses the greatest interest and enthusiasm in the following suggestions for an amended version of his drama, entitled—

*Hair-raising Glimpses of the
Huns.*

There can be no doubt in the mind of any experienced reconstructionist as to the proper—indeed, the only—line to be taken with "Sarah." In fact, the lady is practically merely waiting for a qualified attendant in order to beget a very healthy specimen of the High Life through a Keyhole romance. One simply alters Cauliflower Court into Potsdam Court, and there you are. All the criminals and most of the odours of the locality can be kept just as Dad enjoyed them. The only difference is that a few changes must be

made in the characters; and, by the way, the novel should of course be accompanied by its publishers' certificate that it is a literal record of fact, and that they withhold the heroine's real name merely for family reasons.

The heroine in question is simply our friend Sarah, converted by a dexterous turn of the pen into Fifine, an alluring lady's-maid in the household of a Prussian Markgraf. The Markgraf's name is also withheld in order to increase the appearance of verisimilitude. Little Fifine is a ripper; one can see that even by her own modest account of herself. She frankly confesses to a roguish eye, and the way it bowls over every man with a "von" in his name reminds one of nothing so much as the French "75's." Yet in spite of all temptations she must remain a regular icicle, for tastes have become very austere.

The Markgraf is merely Dad a trifle transmogrified. In all essentials he is quite the same, artful when sober, violent when drunk, and economical in either condition,—in fact, just Dad translated into German. The only important difference is his attitude towards Fifine, which is not at all severe. *Au contraire*, as the lady herself (the most knowing critic possible) ingenuously remarks.

Jane becomes the Markgrafess, or whatever the female of a Markgraf is (the author had better look it up under M in the Encyclopædia Britannica, so as to get his atmosphere quite correct). She will

play the part of Dad in the matter of sitting on Fífine. It is she who abstracts the rabbit—which of course has become either a Pomeranian sable or a Brandenburg ermine—and in several other ways exhibits a very nasty disposition.

Poor Fífine in her artless way confides to the pages of her diary her bewilderment at this unkind behaviour, and the reader (who knows all about the hymn of love conveyed in the imitation sausage, and the broken 10-pfennig bit, half of which dangles on the Markgraf's watch chain and the other half is suspended round the innocent child's neck) absolutely longs to spring into the pages of this realistic volume and open her roguish eyes and warn her very seriously of the dreadful risks she is running. All unconscious of evil she trips innocently into the Markgraf's bedroom when he rings his bell at 1 A.M. and says he has lost part of his pyjamas—and this on the very night the Markgrafess has been summoned to Berlin by an obviously bogus telegram! It is quite one of the most nervey moments in the book.

However, there is always safety in numbers, and it soon appears that the Markgraf has serious rivals. Most prominent and dashing among these is a slightly altered Tom, a gentleman with flashing eyes and up-twirled moustachios, before whom all tremble but little Fífine. He begs her to call him Willie, and asks her to squeeze his mailed fist and alludes to his picturesque cos-

tume as shining armour; and again the well-instructed reader longs to give her the straight tip to flee for the frontier. But in her naïve way Fífine wonders who he can possibly be, and actually gives the fist the daintiest possible squeeze. It is another nervey moment.

Willie has several friends. In the familiar way people have in Court circles, one is styled by his intimates "Zepp," and another "Hindy," and another is alluded to as "the C.P.," and of course all are utterly enslaved by our devastating heroine. But there are moments when they are occupied by sterner matters than love. They have, for instance, a way of gathering at midnight, with the door inadvertently left a chink open, and talking about 420 mm. guns and Belgian neutrality, and what they will do when they get to Paris, and Fífine (at the chink) is very much surprised and interested. Yet she never dreams that all this is going to come so true as to make her book practically a prophecy. At least it would have been if she had only published it soon enough. On the other hand, Revelations pay much better, because no one thinks a prophecy worth buying till the event has come off, so that it is really far better to hold it back and then bring it out as Revelations. In fact, Fífine unconsciously knew her business uncommonly well.

And now comes the thrilling part of Fífine's adventures, the part which will make the reader involuntarily exclaim, "This reads like a novel!" Shut

accidentally in a cupboard, our heroine overhears the declaration of war. Disturbed in her attempted escape, she overhears, beneath the table, Willie giving last tips to the C.P. Acting now on her own initiative, she slips into the uniform of a guardsman and tramps with the tramping hosts to Liège.

Thence by means of an ambulance, a canal boat, an aeroplane, and a destroyer, she reaches her publishers' office—and out comes the whole truth at last!

The funeral scene, the rain, and the inebriates' home can be omitted, and there we have a kind of sublimate of Sarah ready for her tenth edition.

V. AN ERROR OF DESTINY.

This remarkable novel was going to be, so to speak, the head of a procession. The procession would have been five novels long, stretching from two days before the birth of Lancelot Lammering to an extract from his funeral sermon. The idea, in fact, was a biography on the instalment system, just as people buy pianos; only in this case it was the piano which would arrive in instalments—first the strings, and the next year the legs, and the year after the pedals, and so on.

The whole procession was to have been the *Destiny* of Lancelot, and the *Error* (so far as can be gathered from a couple of trunkfuls of preliminary notes) would have been introduced gradually about Volume iv., and would have had something to do with his third marriage—the unhappiest one. But, unluckily, in these changed times the reader might very likely have jumped to the conclusion that it merely referred to the conduct of the Circulating Library in supplying him with the tomes, which

would undoubtedly have handicapped the procession at the very start.

The first instalment would have begun with the joyful anticipations of Lancelot's parents when they first suspected that five volumes full of hero was going to do them credit; and it would have ended—or rather, paused for breath—at his tenth birthday. The various incidents of its plot will have to be summarised rather briefly. There would have been about 600 pages of them, and the task of compressing them is much like the job of summarising ten yearsful of barometric records.

Among the chief cruxes or crises, comes in the first place his actual birth, without which the procession could never have started at all. Then comes his christening, without which he would have been minus his name and a silver mug. So that undoubtedly these are two very important incidents, and must be included in any epitome. The next thing in the nature of a crux or

crisis would seem to be the very vivid and lifelike description which our biographer proposed to give us of his nursery. The wall-paper, the toys, the crib, the nurse, the fire (whether coal or gas), and a thousand and one other vital matters, would have held us enthralled for several chapters.

And then an even more exciting situation develops. Lancelot, left unwatched for ten fatal minutes, hurls his rattle into the fire. Nurse returns, and lo! the rattle has gone. Feverish search throws no glimmer of light on the mystery. For a short space Lancelot crows triumphantly. But Nemesis awaits the overconfident child. With sudden inspiration nurse picks our hero up and shakes him. She thinks she hears something rattle! It is one of *the* moments of the book.

Her cries bring Lancelot's mother in with a rush. Telegrams and telephones bring the doctor rushing also. Kettles are put on the fire; mustard is collected from every pot. Finally, this stirring chapter culminates in the survival of Lancelot by the skin of the two teeth he possesses, after a volcanic experience very delicately and ingeniously hinted at.

Other early situations which our author clearly intended either as turning-points or memorable moments are his interview with his first sunbeam, his first stroking of his first cat (the wrong way unfortunately), and his first scratching in consequence, and

his first enthusiasm over his first snowflake.

And thus, like a beautiful panorama gradually unfolding itself under the eyes of a traveller on a steam roller, Lancelot's life is revealed, not hurriedly week by week, or even day by day, but deliberately hour by hour, so that the reader loses absolutely nothing.

Yet one must not run away with the idea that, because this was going to be a book about the nursery, it would therefore be *for* the nursery. As a matter of fact, it is very doubtful whether it would have been admitted into the average provincial library. For it was to be a true, sincere, outspoken, honest, candid, no-kid-gloves-on, genuine work of genius; and of course if a book is going to be all that—well, there certainly is a seamy side of life even in the nursery, and no Real Artist would dream of hiding the seams.

Lancelot's discovery of his nurse in a peculiarly compromising situation, and his trenchant meditations thereon and emphatic rejection of all milk-and-water explanations, would have made a really eye-opening bit of literature. And the reader's eyes having been thus opened, they would have found something to stare at in our hero's love affair with Doris, a precocious lady of nine, who knew most things worth knowing.

It was the author's intention to make this episode just as 'ot stuff as a publisher would

publish, and blow the provincial libraries and the maiden aunts; and the 'Destiny' would finally have paused upon a firmly struck note of sin, which would have suggested the coming Error very artistically.

What a lot of thoughtful work would have been wasted had it not been possible to reconstruct this plot on up-to-date lines! But fortunately this fate will be averted if, as one sincerely hopes, the author now sets to work instead on—

The Terror of the Briny.

This is to be a real rousing under-water yarn, and a little thickening up of the previous conception is absolutely all that is required. Lancelot will simply be studied at a rather later stage in his development, when he has become a strong silent man styled Reginald Ravenswood. Beginning with the sunbeam and snowflake episodes, we discover Reginald brooding on the lonely shore. The weather should be somewhat murky, and a snowflake or two will be quite appropriate, while a little ray of sunshine can be introduced temporarily. And why does he brood? We shall see! (Note for the author: These very words might with advantage be employed.)

This strong silent man broods because twice over his fiery offers to serve his country have been foiled by the fatuous and incompetent doctors. He was rejected for the army owing to a ligament slightly strained in winning

the hammer-throwing championship for the fourth consecutive year. He was pilled for the navy on account of a trifling injury to his tongue, caused by holding it for so long. What is the unhappy Reginald to do? Substituting his moustache for the cat, the stroking episode could be slipped in here, even as he broods.

Suddenly (by the way, everything happens suddenly instead of gradually in the reconstruction,—in fact, that is one of the chief improvements), suddenly a cry for help uttered in a singularly melodious voice arouses him. A fair head appears amidst the breakers. It is a maiden swimming, but nearly spent. To leap into the breakers likewise, seize her in one powerful arm and with the other breast his shoreward way, is but a trifle to the powerful Reginald.

The rescued maiden is Heather de Montmorency, the girl he loves passionately but hopelessly. For though she loves him back, her father, a retired Field-Marshal who lives in an adjacent manor, has sternly refused to let her wed a "slacker," as he most unjustly terms the willing but twice rejected Ravenswood.

Heather's story is simple. She was bathing, when suddenly in the course of a deep and somewhat prolonged dive, she perceived what she declares must have been a shark of gigantic size. Not unnaturally she became unnerved. Reginald pooh-poohs the shark story, soothes and dries the

trembling Heather, and having thus broken his rule of silence, makes love quite eloquently. But her father is firm, and so must she be.

"I shall do or die!" cries Reginald desperately, as they kiss for what the foolish fellow, who apparently has never taken part in a novel of this type before, imagines to be the last time.

But what to do, or how to die? The reader wonders breathlessly, — but not for long. That very night Reginald Ravenswood, fowling-piece on shoulder, paces the shore awaiting the fighting of the wild goose (his favourite prey). For he is a sportsman of the truest breed.

Suddenly a light flashes. Equally suddenly he remembers dark stories of things happening on this lonely coast that should happen on no respectable shore. Creeping stealthily over the rocks, he surprises an oilskinned figure with a bulls-eye lantern crouching behind a boulder, while dimly visible on the dark waters floats a shape that flashes back. Flashing proves infectious, for in another flash Reginald suddenly remembers the great shark—and he realises!

"Gott in Himmel!" gasps the stranger as Reginald's fingers close round his throat.

"Tell me the German for 'Come ashore one by one!'" hisses Reginald, and with the muzzle of the fowling-piece at his temple, the stranger prudently gives the information.

Our hero flashes the lantern,

spelling the fatal invitation in mystic Teutonic Morse, and one by one the doomed men wade ashore. A cartridge for each, and all is over. The rattle crisis is here adapted to the changed circumstances as Reginald flings their corpses into the sea instead of into the fire. But first he has searched the captain's pockets, and the confidential documents which he discovers make him again break silence. Yet only five words he utters.

"I alone must stop it!"

Half an hour later the retired Field-Marshal and his beautiful daughter are aroused by a shower of gravel on their windows. It is Reginald, holding his captive firmly by the slack of a pair of Wilhelmshaven oilskin bags. Our hero's words remain few, but they are uttered now in a tone of ringing command that all find themselves compelled to obey,—especially as his directions have that quality of inspired common-sense which reveals *The Man for a Crisis*. Awakening her schoolboy brother (or brothers, whichever commends itself to the author), a spirited lad (or lads), Heather, together with the Field-Marshal and the visitor from Wilhelmshaven, accompany our hero back to the shore.

The now deserted submarine—which, by the way, Reginald has drawn up on the beach after the rattle incident—is pushed off, manned by the five, six, or seven adventurers (according to the number of brothers). The trembling captive works the engine,

Reginald peers through the periscope and fires the torpedoes, Heather is ever at his side, while the Field-Marshal and his son or sons provide light relief till danger lowers, and then display nearly as much courage and almost as much grasp of the principles of scientific under-seas warfare as Reginald himself.

What our hero has discovered from the confidential documents is no less terrible an affair than the intended invasion of England that night by an overwhelming force conveyed in forty of the largest and most powerful transports in the German Navy (quite recent additions to that force, with hollow sides filled with bombs). For reasons which every intelligent reader will take for granted, it is quite impossible to inform either the Admiralty or the War Office in time to avert disaster, so that if England is to be saved, it must be by the strong right arm of Reginald Ravenswood.

They arrive just in time to perceive through the periscope the first transport on the point of landing her desperate crew. But the Germans have reckoned without the Terror of the Briny! Propelled by the strong right arm of Reginald Ravenswood, the first torpedo does its deadly work, and all that is left of the transport would scarcely provide souvenirs for the heroic party beneath the waves.

And so the fell work goes on. Transport after transport

as it touches the beach is blown literally to atoms. And then suddenly a new and even more thrilling crisis develops. There are forty transports and Reginald has only thirty-nine torpedoes! What is he to do? Even the growing confidence which the reader is beginning to feel in our hero's capacity will scarcely permit him to believe that he can crack a crux like this.

But silent men know how to think and strong men know how to strike. Reginald waits till the two last transports are abreast, their prows almost touching the gravelly shore, and then with a prodigious effort of his giant muscles launches his last torpedo. It goes clean through both ships. The Terror has done the trick!

Of course there is a little natural reaction, especially as a splinter of shrapnel has almost severed one of our hero's biceps; but this merely gives Heather the opportunity of enfolding the wounded Terror in her arms several pages sooner than would otherwise have been quite maidenly.

And finally comes the distribution of decorations. In this matter our author should not be stingy. Victoria Crosses for all go without saying, but it would be nice to think that the Order of Merit and possibly some such prized degree as LL.D. Oxon. or Mus. Doc. Cantab. had their value likewise enhanced by Reginald's acceptance of these tributes.

THE TALE OF A CASUALTY CLEARING STATION.

BY A ROYAL FIELD LEECH.

CHAPTER I.—THE KICK OFF.

IT was on August 4th, 1914, that we, like so many others, received our orders to mobilise. "We" were at that time called a "Clearing Hospital." Later the title was officially changed. The process of collecting stores at Portsmouth was wearisome, but methodical and accurate to the last safety-pin. Our date of departure for France was uncertain, and as we were eager to be off each twenty-four hours seemed an age of delay. Our personnel of 85 men, gathered from all parts of England, and our equipment of 25 tons, were, however, all forthcoming in due course. The mobilisation arrangements, prepared years before, were perfect. Equipped for the full accommodation of at least 200 patients, we were at last ready for the field, and reported ourselves as such.

It was at daylight on August 16th that we embarked at Southampton. Our destination, hitherto kept a profound secret, was revealed at last. Off Netley the Skipper disclosed his orders. We smiled content. It was the very place we would have chosen.

The journey in a big liner, convoyed by destroyers, across a placid summer sea so upset one's preconceived ideas of a Channel crossing that from the first events were put out of focus. The Colonel knew the

country slightly. Flørrs, our second-in-command, had been to France before. So also, in fact, had "the Boy." Clad in khaki, and laden with war's impedimenta, the outlook appeared so strange that everything seemed weirdly out of place. To feel at home we should have been clothed in tweeds, and fingered Baedekers concealed in ulster pockets; the sea should have been wildly treacherous; wily custom-house officials should have waited to raid us on landing.

It was fortunate that the weather permitted sleep on deck. The reek of horses and men, packed like sardines "tween decks," may be cosy, but it is decidedly enervating. Orders demanded that we should not arrive too soon. The Skipper certainly obeyed them! We left Southampton at 9 A.M., and entered the mouth of the river at Havre just thirty hours later.

Nevertheless, despite the upheaval of our minds, the Seine on that balmy day of August had lost none of its beauty. The horses whinnied with delight at the perfume of the shore. The men, swarming over lifeboats and up ratlines, shouted themselves to a standstill in attempts to return complimentary greetings from the

banks. We officers, grouped upon the upper deck, studied the chateaux unmasking one by one amidst the trees of the heights.

In ever-changing panorama the French villagers, with their flags and banners, their salutes from sporting firearms, and their never-ceasing "Vive l'Angleterre," filled in the chorus.

To describe the sixty miles of river from Havre to Rouen would be but to compete with guide-books. We saw it all as others have seen it. No Englishman, however, since the days of Henry V. and Agincourt, had ever viewed its beauty as we did from the deck of a British military transport. We felt the difference in our very bones. The enthusiastic plaudits from the banks were in themselves sufficient to stir the most lethargic mind to action beyond the beaten path. It was impossible not to reciprocate.

The Boy, meditatively fingering his incipient moustache, glanced at his revolver in an attempt to prove the reality of war. A sentry on the shore in his ill-fitting blue coat and red breeches, equally new to his job, waved his kepi. "Vive la France!" yelled the men.

The C.O., awakening anew to his responsibilities of office, watched the ship warp into the quay with mingled feelings. He had been to war before. This was certainly no holiday trip. Trials of no mean order were already within sight. Perhaps honours

and glory would follow, but death in many forms must first be faced. Slipping his arm through that of his second-in-command, he looked down at the eager faces in the well of the ship. "Somebody, Florrs, has somewhere written, 'Between the eager start and the achievement lie the dead levels of continuance.' Do you think that the Germans are right, and that the war must be over in a few weeks, or will it last for years?"

"Not in a few weeks," cried Florrs cheerfully. "That is, unless it is in our favour. In any case, 'Master,' let us have tea before we start."

Private Champion, rubicund of countenance and smiling from every pore, was within hearing. He dived precipitately down the companion-way. Champion was a man of resource. In no time he produced biscuits, tin mugs, and hot water from the galley. The post of officers' messman suited Champion to a nicety. He was a reservist; therefore nobody knew his antecedents but himself. The officers' mess gear had hitherto not been required. The question of a suitable messman had not as yet been discussed. By hustling over that tea Champion settled the point once and for all. What he might have said, or done, to other aspirants while the appointment was still *sub judice* has never been divulged.

Tea over, the Boy, who in his capacity as senior subaltern had, willy-nilly,

been given charge of the officers' mess, ordered the mess stuff ashore.

Porteous, the junior major, knowledgeable in facts medical and military, precise in detail, and conscientious to duty, drained his cup, readjusted his belts and haversack, and repaired to the hold to disembark his section.

Florrs, with jingling spurs and a genial smile in his eyes, was soon heard in the bowels of the ship ordering grooms. The three loose sub-alterns did as they were told *quickly*.

The quayside was a scene of wearisome excitement. Nothing else was to be expected. Ship after ship, unloading men, horses, guns, and stores, arrived in rapid sequence. It was each unit for itself. The C.O., short in stature, forgot his want of inches. The height of a man does not, of necessity, coincide with power of speech! The disembarkation and sorting of stores needs watching. That was where the C.O. and Quartermaster came in.

Captain Mackenzie, our quartermaster, had no small knowledge of the service and its "ikey" little ways. Juniors of other units tried jostling. They—each in his turn—however, ventured but once. With many campaigns to his credit, sturdy of mind and leonine in countenance, he possessed an accurate knowledge of contents and weight of bales deadly in argument.

Our only Captain, Macfadden, "The Gael," was a

brother Scot from Inverness, in the Army Medical Reserve. He and Mackenzie might wrangle concerning points of difference, but like brothers of a family they invariably combined against outside attack.

That first afternoon in La Belle France, the land of joyous frivolity, was no frivolous outing for us. The sergeant-major reminded more than one man that he was not out for his health. It was quite dark before we had stacked all our five-and-twenty tons of stuff on the quay, and were ready to march into a rest camp.

The war news obtainable was practically nil. Liège had just fallen. Mons was not yet. A camp hastily arranged on the hill of St Aignan was our rendezvous.

The officers trudged with the men. To the tunes of the ever-popular "Tipperary" and the "Marsellaise" we slowly and laboriously climbed over the cobbles of that interminable hill.

It was our first day of active service ashore. The ten days of mobilisation in England were a vision of long ago. Where were the Germans? Nobody at the moment seemed to know. The French girls on the road to the camp thought only of the English. At all events, so it appeared, as they insinuated themselves between the ranks and clung to the arms of the men seeking souvenirs.

The camp, of English bell-tents, occupied a ploughed field. It was pitchy dark.

As we left the road, however, we had not failed to notice the powerful lights and voices emanating from a café at the corner. We smacked our lips in anticipation of dinner. Alas, we had forgotten military law and the hour. The restaurant had already closed its door when we were free to seek it out. Dinner that night was, therefore, but a name. Fortunately sleep can cover much. We were, physically, all picked men, consequently healthy. To sleep, even on a mackintosh sheet in an earth rut, was a simple feat. That St Aignan estaminet, however, inspected through the eyes of hunger on a beautiful morning, will never be forgotten. We found a table in an arbour in the garden and promptly labelled it "Officers' Clearing Hospital." That we were destined to eat that one and only meal there was a fact hidden from us.

Porteous, a pocket dictionary before him, steadily absorbed knowledge with his meal. Florrs, a consistent believer in the value of the personal factor, bandied words with the coquettish little waitress. The spirit of soldiering is to forget tragedy in the acceptance of the joys of the moment. That first morning in France, far from the breath of war, was perfect.

It was the Gael who ended the feast. He had been appointed adjutant. Thrusting his head into the arbour, he brought an official letter from the Staff Office. The contents ordered us to "stand by." Further orders *re* destination

were promised us in the course of the day.

In those early days we were not beyond sight-seeing, when possible. Those who wished to see Rouen had little time to lose. We did not all, however, yearn for the same things. Some were for hunting out the best shops and restaurants, others were intent upon pabulum for letters home. As the censor, new to his office, refused to pass almost anything in the nature of news, it became necessary to fall back upon safe ground of some sort. Florrs, accompanied by Master, chose cathedrals. The Boy wasn't sure, but followed. Porteous was quite sure, and followed also.

Florrs had been aching to reach the cathedral ever since leaving England. Obsessed by the cult of architecture, he would run a mile to gaze upon a decrepit arch or crumbling saint.

A tramway runs from St Aignan to the centre of the city. Like schoolboys on a holiday, we crowded on board a car. Sufficient unto the day was the evil thereof. Our knowledge of the language was not our strong point. Nevertheless, twenty minutes later we had discovered the cathedral.

"Much more English than French in appearance," lectured Florrs. "Have you ever noticed that nearly all French cathedrals are very much higher in proportion to their length than the English ones? The French are broader also, and show elaborate schemes of vaulting and buttressing."

The Boy sighed, Porteous grunted.

"Amiens, for instance," continued Florrs, "is 470 feet long and 170 feet high. Rouen is 448 feet long and only 92 feet high, like Salisbury. It is also about twenty years older than Salisbury. The English occupied Rouen when the cathedral was built, of course."

"Why of course?" asked Master.

"Why, Rouen was the capital of the Dukes of Normandy, and was almost a part of England from 1066 to 1213. The nobles were equally at home in either country."

"Humph!" grunted Porteous, consulting a pocket-book. "Twenty years older than Salisbury, did you say?"

"Yes, the choir is."

"What about that middle spire?" gurgled Porteous.

"A miserable affair of wrought iron," cried Florrs. "Nineteenth century."

"When did the English get fired out of Rouen?" inquired the Boy.

Consulting his watch absently. "Isn't it jolly hot? What about lunch?"

"About 1435, I believe," replied Florrs, ignoring such mundane matters as food.

"Wrong again!" cried Porteous with glee, looking up from his book. "1440, my boy."

Florrs, smiling an unspoken retort, entered the nave. The morning sunlight, mellowed by the beautiful colouring of stained glass, would have glorified the ugliest building. The cathedral of Notre Dame, how-

ever, is beautiful at any time. The effigy of Richard Cœur de Lion, lying above the silver casket in which his heart was buried, drew us like a magnet. It seemed extraordinarily strange that we British officers in uniform, armed and bent upon war, should be standing, after all the centuries between the thirteenth and twentieth, beside that tomb. The tombs of Henry, eldest son of Henry II., and John, Duke of Bedford, gave us also food for thought.

"Now, Amiens, Chartres, Rheims, and other cathedrals," said Florrs, "are much higher than this. They are pure French."

"Quite so!" agreed Master, leading the way into the sunlight. "I promised to meet the others at *déjeuner* somewhere in the main street, so come along."

It was not difficult to choose a café. The street seemed lined with them. French officers in their gaily-coloured uniforms were everywhere. Our sadder-coloured khaki was commented upon politely. Seats were offered us on all sides. Everywhere marked attention was ours. Posting a waiter at the door to watch for others of our unit, we reserved a table. The air was electric with *entente cordiale*. Our khaki was praised for its useful colour; our corps badges were admired and coveted as souvenirs; our rank badges were discussed openly. We quickly learned several things. Three stripes on the sleeve of a jacket means a major with

us. A French major (Commandant) wears four. The R.A.M.C. badge of *Æsculapius*—a serpent on a rod—is used equally by the French and German medical services. We compared notes, there and then, with the French; it was later that we inspected the German tunics!

The others soon found us out. The *à la carte déjeuner* suited us excellently. We were beginning to like war. The camp in the ploughed field was completely forgotten. Suddenly Master, about to light a cigar, paused and gazed at the doorway. There stood Macfadden, heated and anxious.

"Orders just come, sir," he said. "We have to load up on motor-lorries at four o'clock and march to Darnetal railway station."

"Where the dickens is that?" inquired the C.O., seizing his cap.

"About five miles, I believe, sir. It is a jolly long way anyway. An officer has to go there at once and arrange with the Railway Transport Officer for trucks and carriages for personnel and stores."

Master waited for no further words. War was again in the air. To capture a tramcar was the work of a few minutes. Florrs was detailed to ride to "Damn-it-all," as we promptly christened that suburban station, and square the Railway Transport Officer concerning what we wanted before other units got ahead of us. Our heavy stuff was all still on the quay, but we should have to obtain transport from the

A.S.C. and load it all before we could march. A Clearing Hospital did not possess its own transport. On the whole, we were glad we were not destined to remain longer at St Aignan. We had come to France for war. Rouen at its worst could not be called that.

The men got under way with a will. They were a good lot, and proved it many times during the days to come. Marching in fours downhill was somewhat different to the ascent. We met a new unit disembarking at the quay, and smiled pityingly.

Details concerning loading stores on motor-vans and despatching them to the railway station would interest nobody. The process certainly bored us intensely. When it is explained that such stores consisted of every detail, from a marquee to a lemon-squeezer, necessary to a large hospital, it will be understood what our burden was. If the uninitiated will but imagine the various items required for one accident in civil life, and multiply this by 200, some sort of idea may be obtained of what a Clearing Hospital on the move means to those who have to move it. One little item of thirty marquees was in itself more than a handful. That these tents were discarded, later on, in favour of ready-made French buildings, was a mercy of which at that time we were unfortunately ignorant. To balance this lack of information, however, we were equally ignorant that before long our complement of patients would

seldom, in a day, fall as low as two hundred. A Clearing Hospital is the field hospital nearest the fighting line. It must follow within a few miles of the Field Ambulances of the Division, and receive all patients evacuated nightly by the latter units. When the distance between the two becomes inconveniently great, the Clearing Hospital must pack up, follow on, and reopen. The tide of war decides the number of moves.

The ease and rapidity of transport at Rouen quay that evening does not remain among our most pleasing memories. In fact, the last load did not reach Darnetal station until close upon midnight. Florrs, who had discovered an estaminet close to the station, had already dined twice over before the rest of us arrived.

Nor did we entrain without trouble. The railway officials had apparently never been faced with such problems of accommodation before. Our French did not help matters. Master grew heated, spoke angry words to the British Railway Transport Officer. The "R.T.O." exercised what knowledge of French methods, language, and brains he possessed upon the stationmaster. The French military R.T.O., as was his duty, intervened. The railway was in military hands. A French Military officer, therefore, commanded the stationmaster. The British R.T.O. was supposed to conduct his business through the former. We were destined to meet many such. The more

cooks, less good broth! Later, we discovered the real man at the wheel. Orders might fly hither and thither, language polite might cajole, and language strong might bully, but the engine could not start, or stop, without its driver. An hour with this autocrat was a mere trifle of time. If he wanted a meal, the stationmaster might, in those days, order as he liked; when the meal was finished, he would often start without a second's warning.

Once started, all was well. French first-class compartments are very comfortable. We were tired, and found no difficulty in sleeping. The Boy preferred a greatcoat, pillow, and the floor. The only fly in the ointment was the Gael. We had not heard him snore before!

Even the C.O. had received no hint of our destination. The civilian globe-trotter, his ticket in his pocket, knows none of the joys incident upon being unaware of his destination or time of arrival. In war all such convenient details are secret.

The train reached Amiens about what we considered breakfast-time. We gazed upon the station restaurant with anxious eyes. Florrs, the sleep gone from his eyes in a moment, risked the safety of his neck in an attempt to catch a glimpse of the Cathedral.

The Amiens R.T.O., approaching Master, consulted a telegram.

"Clearing Hospital?" he inquired.

"Yes. Detraining here, I suppose?"

"What about breakfast, sir?" intervened the Boy softly.

"The orders are for you to push on, sir," replied the R.T.O. blandly. "At once."

"Sold again!" chuckled Porteous.

"Where for?" questioned the C.O. insinuatingly.

"Don't know in the least," answered the R.T.O. "St Quentin is your next stop."

"Heavens!" breathed the Boy tragically, thrusting his head through the off window. "Hi—there! Champion! Pass the word somebody for Private Champion."

Champion's smiling countenance loomed up on the track in a moment. He had thoughtfully stowed an emergency box of provender beneath the seat. Cups, plates, butter, and a kettle appeared like magic.

"How are we to have tea without hot water?" sighed the Boy. "We don't run to a spirit lamp."

Without a word Champion, kettle in hand, disappeared through the far door into space. That he could speak no word of French seemed to bother him not at all. Where he had gone we could not see. That he returned with a steaming kettle, and had to be hauled into the carriage by the seat of his trousers as the train got up speed, however, is a recorded fact.

"Where did you get it?" cried the Boy.

"Engine, sir," panted Champion, diving into the box for sugar and condensed milk.

"Good boiling water, sir! Got it from the engine-driver."

"Humph!" grunted Porteous. "What did you say to him?"

"Said 'Bonjour,' and took it, sir," grinned Champion. "That's the only way, sir, with these Frenchmen. The water in the engine is just beautiful for tea."

As a dependable man Champion was decidedly gaining our confidence.

The men were enjoying themselves thoroughly. At every little station *en route* we were greeted with *vivas* from the villagers. Whenever and wherever the train paused, there was an enthusiastic exchange of souvenirs in the shape of every conceivable article to hand. With a few loose words of a foreign tongue, incorrectly pronounced, the British soldier will carry on a conversation anywhere.

It took most of the morning to reach St Quentin. Shameful though it may be to admit it, few of us had ever heard of the renowned city before. The fact that it possessed a Cathedral helped Florrs. He stated that the building was remarkable by reason of the shot-holes made by Spanish guns, which once upon a time battered it. He was quite correct. Even Porteous, later in the day, had to admit it.

A bevy of French officers met us at the station. A British Staff officer brought orders. Our guess that we were to disembark was correct.

We found the large railway

station already inundated with officers and men of other corps. We were ordered to detrain our men and riding-horses, stack our equipment in one of the goods sheds, and proceed into billets. To the men was apportioned a spacious day-school building. Each officer received a special billeting order signed

by the *Maire*. How to find one's billet was a puzzle each of us was expected to solve for himself.

The map showed us where we stood. The Belgian frontier was near enough to please us. Our unit was evidently not intended to remain in reserve. So far—*Bon!*

CHAPTER II.—ST QUENTIN.

The process of being billeted in a foreign town presents distinct possibilities of adventure. We had no precedent to go upon. The oldest British soldier had never been billeted abroad before. An unknown address was all the information divulged. In the event of the house being shut up, one was requested to interview the *Maire* at the Hôtel de Ville. In war one must show initiative!

No two of us being apportioned to the same billet, we ordered our servants to seize our goods and chattels and summon local vehicles.

Master's man, Weldon—a smart-looking reservist, who in private life was a groom—promptly captured a *fiacre*. Florrs, assisted by his phlegmatic "Charles," was next to follow. Charles, who at home was "boots" in a Dorsetshire hotel, was thoroughly at ease in his calling. Porteous, followed by his personal satellite—one Bacon—disappeared in an opposite direction. The others drifted off in apparent aimlessness. What happened to them was not disclosed till nightfall.

Master's *fiacre* climbed a tortuous hill towards the Cathedral, passed through the main square, and sought the residential quarter. The driver pulled up before a pretentious-looking dwelling, obviously the home of a doctor. With his billeting paper well to the front and his spurs rattling boldly on the cobbles, Master pulled a great bell. A buxom maid responded to the summons, inspected the billeting demand, shrugged her shoulders, and chattered volubly. Master's knowledge of French was not his strong point. Apparently in order to make things more difficult, the driver of the *fiacre* assisted. Weldon, more practical in his methods, at once relieved the vehicle of the luggage and deposited it in the hall. It was more a courtyard than a hall, for in it reposed a victoria. At last the girl managed to explain. Monsieur and Madame were absent, and would not return until nightfall. On the principle that possession is nine points of the law, Master paid the driver, ordered Weldon to rendezvous at the house at

7 o'clock, left his luggage and his compliments for Monsieur and Madame in the hands of the serving-maid, and retreated to see to the welfare of his men.

Macfadden, in his capacity of adjutant, had marched the latter to the school. The place was at once besieged by the women and children of the neighbourhood. The men, in an excess of *entente cordiale*, gave away their corps badges, and even allowed the buttons to be cut off their jackets, as souvenirs. The atmosphere buzzed with "Vive l'Angleterre." The hard ration biscuit was viewed with wonder, and accepted as a souvenir with avidity. There was fortunately a gate which could be closed. Guards had to be mounted to save the men from their friends. Not one of the rank and file had ever been on the Continent before.

Looking after them was like conducting a Cook's touring party. Their discipline was excellent. They did no harm, and learned something every minute. It is certain that half their rations went, that first day, to feed the local poor. A proud mother with a perambulator paraded her baby, adorned with the British badge of Æsculapius in its bonnet, up and down the main thoroughfare in the cool of the evening. Girls vied with each other in sporting any regimental badge they could wheedle out of a man.

The classrooms of the school formed excellent barracks, and the men thoroughly appre-

ciated the blackboards for artistic work. The German Emperor, in every conceivable shape, was an easy first favourite as an artistic study!

At that time it was the Emperor's person for which the concentrated venom of the French peasant seemed specially reserved. To the English soldier he was a subject of ridicule. The French took him seriously. Our big jack-knives, which hung by a lanyard as part of our kit, were generally pointed to with bated breath as a peculiarly useful weapon for Guillaume. "A bas Guillaume!" gurgled an old woman with one tooth, pointing to the Gael's knife and drawing her finger significantly across her skinny throat. "Ah — Guillaume!" hissed another virago as she decapitated a fowl in her back-yard.

St Quentin was very crowded. As trains of khaki-clad troops slowly passed through the railway station an assemblage of people stood, hour by hour, at the level crossing to cheer them on. Trams ran up the hill to the main square and Hôtel de Ville every few minutes. The bridge over the river was thronged with all ranks awaiting news. The cafés in the square were gay with uniforms. British motor-lorries, still bearing the labels of well-known English tradesmen, rumbled through in long convoys carrying ammunition and food *en route* for the firing line. Beyond the square the massive pile of the Cathedral loomed up in the shadows.

Above all shone an August sun heating the cobbles to furnace pitch.

We found ourselves honoured guests; even the trams refused to charge us. To seek a seat in a café called forth a host of polite attentions and offers of drinks from those in the vicinity. The *entente* at times became decidedly embarrassing.

Most of us forgathered for dinner at an hotel on the hill. An official interpreter had been appointed to the unit. He was an infantry soldier, until lately a clerk in Paris. Master asked him to dine with us. Coffee and cognac outside a café followed dinner.

Those of us who had not appeared at dinner were lost until the next day in their billets. Florrs was one of these. An Englishman afflicted with shyness is not an uncommon sight under certain circumstances. It transpired that the wretched Florrs, longing to join the rest of us, had found himself accepted by his hosts *en famille*. He could speak a little French, and he spent most of the evening using that little in trying to persuade the son of the family that the latter knew no English, which apparently he had refused to believe. Feeling strangely forlorn, he was obliged to remain the evening, drink several strange liqueurs, and then to bed. Mackenzie was so delighted with the spacious domain in which he found himself that he had no wish to break away. He had been entertained with afternoon tea in the garden,

and a charming daughter of the house had so appealed to him that he proceeded to invite his brother Gael to share the joys of society. Except when they were on duty, the rest of us saw little of either of them during the three days of our stay in St Quentin.

The scene outside the café in the cool of the evening was gay and interesting. Men and maidens, officers, clerks, workmen, and soldiers in every grade of uniform, sauntered past. It was the lull before the storm.

A pretty little brunette, with pathetic brown eyes, hovering near us, suddenly caught the eye of the interpreter. Turning at once to Master, he requested to be excused a moment to speak a word to "a friend," and left his seat. They exchanged kisses fondly before the world, and walked hand-in-hand into the square. He, very fair, and she, of foreign darkness, they presented a pleasing and romantic picture. The Boy sighed deeply and drained his glass. Presently the lover returned, the girl's eyes following him.

"Your fiancée?" inquired Master.

"Oh no, my friend," he answered quietly. "I am too young to marry. Perhaps that will come some day."

Since St Quentin we have seen neither of them. It is to be hoped that the little girl does not wear crape, nor a kepi upon a cross surmount a certain soldier's grave!

Martial law prevailing, the café doors shut promptly at

nine o'clock. Master, two hours overdue, sought his billet. Passing the Hôtel du Commerce, he sighed regretfully. Why had he not taken a room there in peace on his own account? He soon reached the good medico's house, and rang the bell with diffidence. The door opened on the instant.

Monsieur, an elderly man with a gentle, nervous manner, himself stood on the threshold. Behind him chattered the maid. In the near distance stood Madame. The welcome was so effusive, there was such a plethora of handshaking and bowing, that Master entered the house with a light heart. Monsieur insisted upon formally presenting him to Madame. What could be more appropriate? The presentation completed, he expected to be shown his room. But no, there was still some ceremonial wanting. Monsieur spoke carefully selected words. Master, understanding little, smiled blandly, and mumbled, "Oui, Oui." Monsieur, evidently delighted, grasped a hat and bowed more than ever; Madame once more shook hands; the maid opened the door effusively.

Like a man in a dream, Master followed his host into the street. Towards the Hôtel du Commerce they wended their way in futile converse. It was not, however, until they had entered the hall-way of that noted hostel that Master's mind received its awakening. There, staring him in the face, was the whole of his baggage, guarded by Weldon.

"I've been here two hours, sir," explained the latter. "I only just found out what it all means, sir. The old gentleman has hired a room here for you, instead of keeping us in his own house. Major Porteous and Mr Strawleigh are here too, sir."

Master's relief expressed itself in his face. With beaming eyes, he shook hands for positively the last time with the polite old doctor, and handed him out into the street.

Porteous and the Boy were found in the bar. The former, frowning over a pocket dictionary and a French newspaper, was yearning for the latest war news. The Boy, more interested in the affairs of the moment, sought solace in a bottle of *vin rouge*. It appeared that they also were having their rooms in the hotel presented by local residents in lieu of being housed at home.

We did not fail to sympathise with those kindly people at St Quentin. For an elderly couple living their simple life in a provincial town to be unexpectedly invaded by foreign officers, whose tastes and habits they were but dimly conversant with, must have been no small trial. We could readily understand the relief it must have been for one's hosts to have been able to arrange for us at an hotel. We did not know then what those selfsame gentle people were to suffer later. It was but a matter of days before the Germans entered the town. The enemy are still there, as

this is being written. If the guns are booming there, as they are here at the moment, I fear the worst for the peace of St Quentin, and those who, willy-nilly, have the Huns for their guests.

We were three days in that town — days of impatience and speculation. Other units suffered the same. We gathered comfort from comparing notes. Except for a belated Paris daily paper, the war news was decidedly scrappy and inaccurate. We were not permitted to say in our letters where we were. That one train-load of troops after another was pushing rapidly forward "somewhere" was the only solid fact of which we were certain. Sitting about in front of cafés, hobnobbing with local wiseacres and *bon vivants*, may have its attractions. To those embarked on a matter of life and death it was a very trying existence. If the local inhabitants, however, were shadowed by dull care, they certainly concealed it admirably. Their confidence was superb.

The dinner-table at the Hôtel du Commerce was possibly the most entertaining place in the town. The custom of French officers and men sitting down to meals at the same table was new to us. A private seemed to think nothing of conversing amiably with a colonel. When we heard that the troops in the locality were mostly Territorials, we began to understand.

It was at one of these famous meals that Florrs fell

foul of Porteous. The episode would hardly be worthy of record, were it not that its memory embittered the latter's soul all through the campaign. Porteous, filled with geniality and an honest zeal to further his knowledge of French, had, somehow or other, picked up an acquaintance with a French officer and his charming wife. It was before dinner. Florrs, buoyed up by an antepandial glass of vermouth, sauntered nonchalantly into the hall. Porteous then made the mistake of his life. In halting French he introduced Florrs to Madame. The latter, vivacious and burning with *entente* towards all brave English officers, met Florrs' admiring glances with marked appreciation. Slowly they edged towards the dining-room. The place was crowded. A little table for three offered the only seclusion. Florrs did not hesitate. Madame, accepting a whispered compliment with *empressement*, made no demur. Her husband meekly followed. The nearest seat left for Porteous was at the long middle table amidst strangers.

What Porteous thought he could not say. His lips moved ominously, but no words came. He has, however, been saying the words off and on ever since. A casual reference to the charm of St Quentin is quite sufficient even still to loosen the vials of his sarcasm. Porteous did not speak to the lady again. That Florrs did, however, at every opportunity was only, as Por-

teous remarked with a snort, what would have been expected of him.

Our orders came at last. We were more than ready for them. They were plain enough, and yet painfully vague. Who can foretell the result of a battle? The number of troops engaged being known, an estimate of probable casualties, founded upon experience of previous campaigns, can be made. Estimates, however, may prove tragically fallacious.

The Field Ambulances had already gone on; the Stationary Hospitals had opened out in the town; the Clearing Hospitals were ordered forth to the Railhead.

The railway rolling-stock being limited, we decided to leave our horses. The remainder of our equipment was quickly loaded into trucks. We were allotted half a cattle truck for officers and two for men. The other half of our truck was given to another unit. We each had 8 officers—16 in one truck! Sixteen sleeping-valises and boxes of food for two messes completed the load. We quickly realised that we were not launching forth on a joy-ride.

“Railhead” means the farthest point to which trains are permitted to approach the

enemy's lines. We knew that a battle was in progress—that was all. What we were to do when railhead was reached was left to Master's initiative. That the Field Ambulance would collect the wounded and send them back to railhead was to be expected. The sealed-pattern scheme arranged was that the empty supply-waggon returning for rations to railhead should bring back wounded to the Clearing Hospitals.

It was midnight when we came to a full stop. We were at the little railway station of Berlaiment. All was deadly still. An empty ambulance train awaited on a siding. Except for the station-house, an estaminet, and a few houses near the bridge over the railway, and the ambulance train, we appeared to have the world to ourselves.

This could not possibly be the official railhead. Had we overshot the mark? It certainly looked like it.

Instead of opening out our tents and getting to work, all was peace. An ominous atmosphere of desertion hung over the place. We utterly failed to understand. No new orders awaited us; no Field Ambulances were in sight. Was this the night before the battle, or the night after?

CHAPTER III.—THE RETREAT FROM MONS.

Morning broke. There was a clear, cloudless summer sky. The main road, crossing the

railway by the bridge and winding past the station on our left, was still deserted.

The men, their camp-kettles sizzling beside the track, prepared the morning meal.

Presently a handful of French cavalrymen, leading horses, whose ulcerated backs and limping gait bore pitiful witness to the work they had performed overnight, halted by the roadside. One noted at a glance that this was not the stamp of soldier one had seen in the streets of St Quentin. These were the regular cavalry—hard, wiry.

It must have been an hour or more before more troops came into view. With our field-glasses we keenly scrutinised the advancing line. That they were khaki-clad and more than weary was soon obvious to the naked eye. There was, however, no sign of disorder. We had as yet received no news whatever of a reverse. We smiled upon the retreating army with satisfaction. If ever ignorance in this world was bliss, it was then.

A junior Staff officer, map and pencil in hand, explained to us the route they had come. It was, he informed us, a "strategical retreat." Despite subsequent events, the appearance of the men at that moment proved his words without question. A Field Ambulance, officers, men, and horses, marching in perfect column of route, next claimed our attention. A murmur went forth that the ambulance waggons were filled with wounded—the first we had encountered in the war.

Our men seized the stretchers, the cooks re-stoked their fires and increased their hot-

water supply; the Quartermaster issued bovril and milk. The ambulance train, however, had also been on the *qui vive*. It cleared the Field Ambulance promptly. No intervening hospital was required.

The column of men, horses, and waggons filed past in orderly sequence for an hour or so; then we heard guns. So far we realised nothing of what was really happening. Presently a battery, suddenly halting on the bridge, turned to unlimber. There was a pause. The alarm, however, was but momentary. Probably only a Uhlan patrol. Again the khaki column continued on its way as if returning from a dusty field-day. At last the rearguard disappeared down the road. Except for the half-filled ambulance train, we were alone again.

It was many days before we heard the explanation. The army retreating from Mons had not yet made their celebrated stand at Le Cateau. The battle for which we had come had not taken place.

It was the stationmaster who raised the alarm. What he had been hearing over the wires we could only guess. When he informed us, however, that he was deserting his post at once, it caused us to think furiously. It was then noon.

The ambulance train decided to start. Master looked for Staff officers, wounded, anything, to give a hint as to a course of action. The other Clearing Hospital C.O.'s did likewise. The sergeant-major, having his own ideas of things,

went the round of the train and ordered the men to erase the scurrilous remarks and sketches in chalk redolent of the Kaiser adorning the outside of the carriages. He was of opinion that such embellishments might, under certain circumstances, become unhealthy.

There seemed to be no chance of more wounded reaching us. We tentatively packed up, and held a consultation. "All aboard" was the unanimous verdict. The engine-driver, his nervous hand upon the lever, needed no orders. The ambulance train quickly followed.

Soon we passed Le Cateau. The village was as yet not famous. It seemed a pretty little place. Laden fruit trees and neat gardens presented a pleasing and peaceful outlook on that August morning. A few wounded men had found their way across country from Mons to the station. Other village stations, as we slowly passed along, also called for help. As the ambulance train was picking them up, there was nothing for us to do. The strategical trend of events was still a closed book to us.

We entered St Quentin again about 4 P.M. The station was like a swarming beehive, with troops and refugees. Regiments on the way up and those on the way down seemed to be inextricably mixed up. To obtain speech of an R.T.O. was too much to expect. Staff officers jostled one another. The detailed news of a rapid "strategical retreat" met us at every turn. What we

wanted was food and a bath. We did not doubt that our movements were all part and parcel of a definite plan. We did not know what was happening, but whatever it was it was all right.

Eventually we extracted definite orders. When the Army doesn't know what it wants to do, how can a wretched C.O. of a Clearing Hospital, whose duty it is to follow, decide upon his movements? Our train, complete, was side-tracked, and we were commanded to sleep in our horse-trucks. We ventured to expostulate *re* sixteen officers of two separate units being crowded into one truck. Our remarks might just as well have been addressed to the deceased Queen Anne. Reading between the lines, we began to gather a few crumbs of real news. Our subsequent orders would depend upon the Germans!

The compound of the station was filled with French infantrymen who had stacked their arms. The cafés were packed like sardines. Officers and men were all exceedingly cheerful. Nevertheless the change in the appearance of the town since we had left it only the day before was remarkable. It had suddenly assumed the attitude of an armed camp.

We obtained some dinner with difficulty, also a bath at an excellent bathing establishment close to the station. Then we collected our horses, captured another truck for the men, and prepared for eventualities. Some of us who had been in South Africa compared

our position with that following Colenso. A repulse was an excellent stimulant. That anything really serious was afield worried us not at all. One ambulance train after another, filled with wounded, pulled up in the station, received orders, and pushed along for the Base at Rouen.

We slept in our truck that night the sleep of tired men. We were also somewhat dispirited. We had gone forth to war, and been able to do nothing. Each of us had nurtured his own vision of work to be performed. That it had not come our way gave us no comfort. There was no occasion for impatience. We did not know it then, but we do now!

We were abroad early next morning after news. Rumour of the fight at Le Cateau village had reached us at St Quentin. The "strategical" retreat seemed to be still in progress!

The reason for our want of orders was not difficult to find. The collection of wounded from an army in rapid retreat can only be done with any success by staying with the wounded and surrendering the medical unit *en bloc*. We were not destined for that fate, so we remained at St Quentin. Some of the Field Ambulances were not so fortunate, and remained for months as German prisoners.

Our fate hung in the balance all the morning. The Stationary Hospitals in the town were already filled with straggling wounded. What the French townspeople really thought we could not know. What they

expressed was implicit child-like confidence in our arms. They certainly did not seem to be making any move towards retreat. None of us in St Quentin understood.

It was not until 7 P.M. that our train moved. The reason why was not vouchsafed to us. All we knew was that our destination was Amiens. There were four Clearing Hospitals behind that one engine, and we were still sixteen officers in a cattle-truck. One other Clearing Hospital remained behind. It eventually escaped with its personnel, but that was all. Every stick of its equipment had to be left in St Quentin.

We slept that night anyhow. The two units, separated by a line of mess boxes, began to dislike one another. Somebody sat in somebody's else's jam-pot. Expostulations merely resulted in short, sharp references to proper places for jam-pots. Florrs openly wished that he was still at the Hôtel du Commerce. Porteous sniffed scathingly.

Shortly after daylight the train dribbled into a station. Nobody came to meet it. Master, rubbing his eyes, sprang from the carriage and looked about him. This certainly was not Amiens, and yet we were due there hours before. The place was as deserted as Ber-laimont. At last a senior Staff officer (medical) was discovered sitting alone near the telegraph station.

"What are you doing here?" inquired the latter anxiously.

"We started for Amiens,"

answered Master. "The engine brought us here apparently."

"Well, it brought you wrong," came the firm answer. "This is Noyon, and no place to loiter in, unless you want to be captured. If you were told to go to Amiens, you had better go."

Master grunted his feelings. Things began to look as if we were running. Like a dog with his tail between his legs, he sauntered up the platform, seeking possible news. Presently he discovered a solitary figure leaning disconsolately against a station-house. Closer observation disclosed a dirty, unkempt, young medical officer.

"Who are you?" asked Master.

"Medical officer of the — regiment."

"What has happened? Where is the regiment?"

"Don't know," answered the youngster wearily. "The Colonel gave the order to retire, and I retired with them." He rubbed his three days' beard and paused to control his shaking voice. "They scattered. I lost them. I believe they are—er—all killed."

Some distance farther along, a young infantry private dragged himself into the station and sank down on a box. We spoke to him, anxiously seeking news. He was but an honest English lad who had evidently not been long from the country. He stared vacantly to his front. He tried to answer our questions, but his voice broke in a sob. We realised what the shock must have been to him. He had indeed seen war. We left him,

and hurried, with chastened spirits, back to our truck. We were beginning to feel.

The engine-driver seemed ready to go anywhere. We hurled invectives at him for going wrong, and started him off for Amiens. Breakfast, cooped up in the truck as we were, was scrappy. We seemed to be travelling as in a dream when all things go awry.

After many delays we steamed into the great station at Amiens at luncheon-time. The Boy was off at once to the restaurant. Master and Florrs hurried after the R.T.O.

The latter's instructions were brief and unanswerable. He had just received orders to evacuate the station of everybody without a moment's delay. The R.T.O.'s advice was good. We learned later that a whole big General Hospital, with equipment for 100 beds, had been deserted at Amiens.

Our vision of being at last free to use our legs and do some real work in this historic city of Amiens fell away like a house of cards. There was no room for hesitation. Certainly the guard of our train was taking no risks. He had never been known to start punctually before.

We reached Rouen at 9 P.M. Our train stopped at the goods station. Across a road was the passenger station.

To describe the latter place as it really was on that night of pandemonium—August 27th—would be a task to try even a pen like Zola's. Civilian refugees presented the predominant factor. These—

men, women, and women with children in arms—fought for places in trains leaving the city. Train-loads of wounded soldiers, French and Turcos, disgorged their freight anyhow. A French "first-aid post," located in the waiting-rooms, did much. Soup-kitchens did what they could. At the main entrance English wounded were being sorted out, and despatched either to hospital ships in waiting or to the British General Hospitals erected in tents on the Race-course. There was not much time to spare. Or rather, it was then supposed not.

How the tide of war was progressing we had no idea. We reported ourselves, and offered assistance. Apparently the arrangements to meet the British trains already arrived had been met. We were, however, asked to help later on. There was lots to do, but it was a case of too many cooks possibly spoiling the broth.

It was at 7 o'clock in the morning that we were called upon to undertake our first definite job. Trains of wounded were arriving hourly from the front. It was necessary that these should be unloaded by skilled hands, their bandages possibly readjusted, and despatched to the hospitals at the Race-course. This we undertook to do.

The men fell to with the zeal of pent-up effort. Master negotiated the loan of a large goods platform from the French Railway people. The trains could unload on one side, and

upon the other was a station courtyard leading direct to the tram lines.

Porteous, a keen sanitarian, led a squad of men to sprinkle the cement platform with antiseptic solution by means of a garden water-can. Rope tied between the supports of the roof reserved our ground. The cooks, rigging up a fire-place in the courtyard, had a fire going and hot bovril and milk ready within fifteen minutes. The Red Cross flag surmounting the Union Jack (the only flag allowed to do so) advertised a British "aid post." Stretchers laid in orderly rows between the ropes and enclosure for dressing wounds, and an organised party of men to load and unload, completed the picture.

At the gate a Staff officer superintended the work of loading the stretchers through the windows of the trains. As fast as one train was squared up another came. The completion of the work seemed hopeless. Officers and men continued steadily with ease after case all through that summer day. Some nursing sisters came later, offering help. It was gladly accepted. Wounded French were exchanged with British wounded at the French aid post over the way. Between each batch of wounded the platform was washed and swept. Onlookers came to inspect and wonder. We had no use for spectators, and told them so.

Like all other things in this world of trials, a lull came towards evening. It was

fortunate, for the hospitals and hospital ships were full to overflowing. About sunset, after sweeping and garnishing the floor ready for another consignment, we were surprised to find none waiting. Straightening our backs, we breathed deeply and sought our pipes. How long our respite was to last we could not tell. Quite 600 cases had already been fed, doctored, and transferred to better surroundings since we had started.

Champion had cornered a place beyond the ropes for our mess. Here we found our bedding forming a laager, with the mess-table in the centre.

As we sat at tea in the cool of the evening on the station platform at Rouen and considered matters, we began to have a better opinion of ourselves. We had for the first time done something to help. It was, perhaps, not war such as we had known it in eastern lands, but it was a beginning.

Night-duty men having been mounted, some of us dared to turn in on stretchers. It was a night, however, not destined to be free from care. Wounded dribbled in from one train after another. Trains on their way through to Havre halted for succour of wounded on the way. Some men wanted wounds dressed; others cried out for food.

It was not necessary for every one to be on duty. Those who were for the moment free courted sleep. It was not real sleep. Only a deaf man could sleep on a

French railway platform. We learned the trick in time, but it takes learning. There is an engine whistle in France. For those who have heard a French engine-driver performing upon that instrument no further explanation is necessary. No other nation can compete. Its tone is like the continued shrieks of Hades intensified, and the engine-driver is proud of it.

To describe all that happened during the next twenty-four hours would be but to repeat the work of the first day. We slept, fed, and worked on that one platform. Where the Field Ambulances might have got to we did not then hear. That they were retreating with the army, and that some were prisoners in the hands of the Germans, was information then withheld from us. Suddenly we were informed that our base had been moved farther south. Where—we could not learn. That was a secret. Several Clearing Hospitals were ordered forthwith to embark on board ship. We, who had received no such orders, chuckled at the news of them having to go to sea again. Other people's trials are notoriously inspiring!

One of the duties of a Clearing Hospital is to throw out tentacles wherewith to collect wounded from various rail-heads. The orders that reached us on the 29th proved that our retreat had been stayed at last. We were learning by experience to put two and two together. An officer with seven men and necessary equipment

was ordered to proceed to Creil at once to gather stragglers. Another would perform the same duty at the farthest railhead he could reach. These orders were encouraging. In an advance we knew the scheme of events perfectly, and were wildly keen to give it a trial. From each railhead each day the Army Service Corps waggons would go forth with food for the fighting line. On their return they would bring the wounded of the day to the tentacles of the Clearing Hospitals. If the railhead advanced, so also would the tentacles.

It was not until the following day that the orders for the unit as a whole came. Our work at the railway station had ceased automatically. But a few patients remained at the last moment. Having disposed of these to the Stationary Hos-

pitals and ships, we loaded up again into new cattle-trucks, rejoicing that the unit was at last alone to work out its own salvation. Having been hampered by tents and horses which we never used in the retreat, we determined to leave these behind. Buildings must replace tents. The lighter our load the more mobile the unit.

For the second time, therefore, we bid adieu to Rouen. Our hearts were once more filled with hope. This, our second venture forward, was supported by experience which the first lacked. Also, an advance is a very different occasion from a retreat. The place of our destination was unfolded to us before the train started. Its very name breathed advance. The official diary read: "11.30 A.M. Started for Advance Base —Le Mans."

CHAPTER IV.—LE MANS.

We arrived at a station somewhere about 6 A.M. The train stopped in a goods yard, where nobody seemed to know anything. Presently we began to make ourselves heard. A Staff officer or two came, looked, and departed. We rapidly realised that our small unit was not the only pebble on the beach. Still, it was plainly apparent that the atmosphere was different from that encountered on arrival at Rouen.

Trains of wounded French were pouring westwards through the station. Tur-

cos, their voluminous canvas breeches stiff with blood, deliberately smeared over them, dangled their legs from trucks, or waddled up the platform. The railway staff seemed at their wits' end. But it was not the confused muddling of a forced retreat. The news soon sifted to us that we formed part of a rapid advance. Still, even an advance may be too rapid for calculated arrangements. A sudden change of Base from Rouen to Nantes had been effected. Many units had gone by sea from Rouen. Others, like our-

selves, had struck the new line of communications across country.

Master, all over the place after information, returned with the news. The Germans had turned tail and were on the run; wounded might be expected hourly; hospital accommodation would have to be arranged by us until such time as one of the belated Stationary Hospitals should appear on the horizon.

A Medical Staff officer found the required location, and a London taxi-cab awaited our advance-party of officers in the station-yard.

The road from the station, traversed by a tram line, led up a steep hill to the principal square. The ancient Cathedral, silhouetted against an azure sky, rose up on the left; then again came a hill. A gateway, with a lodge, a circular drive, and an imposing palace at the bottom, was our rendezvous. It was the dismantled palace of the Archbishop of Le Mans. The same building had housed the German Staff on its way to Paris in 1870.

It was a pretentious edifice, but we had no time at the moment for detailed admiration. To swarm over the house and apportion rooms for a hospital was our first objective. Incidentally we did not fail to notice that the walls of an imposing stone staircase had been stripped of tapestry, nor that from a back verandah one could look down upon a beautiful old-world garden stretching for a hun-

dred yards in either direction. The kitchens were enormous. In the loft were sealed doors, behind which reposed the musty documents of the bishopric. It was obvious to all who cared to read that the desertion of the palace was due to the overthrow of the Church and Jesuits by the Government some few years previously.

The orders received were explicit. Within an hour wounded would pour in. Except for the equipment in our trucks at the station, there was no hospital gear, and as all the horses in the city had been requisitioned for the army, there was no transport. "What can do?" as the Indian servant would say. A hospital had to be made out of little—somehow. Motor transport would, no doubt, appear on the scene later, but we wanted it then.

Fortune favoured us. A local interpreter intervened from somewhere. The Staff officer's taxi was commandeered. Master, at fever heat, seized the interpreter, and raced him from one possible horse-owner to another. Some promised a horse in the afternoon; some had a carriage but no horse; some said anything calculated to get rid of importunity. The interpreter was rapidly getting heated. Master, although far from cool, was determined. Persistence won the day. A wholesale vendor of vegetables was unearthed from a side street. He had not only a cart and horse, but potatoes,

cabbages, and fresh tomatoes. With the British exchequer behind him, Master did not hesitate. Ordering a couple of sacks of potatoes and another of vegetables, to be called for in half an hour, the horse and cart were captured and urged stationwards. The driver pleaded *déjeuner* first. Master's answer was adamant. He stood over him and accompanied him to the box-seat.

The subsequent details are unrecorded. It is sufficient to relate that within an unbelievably short time the essential gear reached the palace, and the men, hanging on to the tram-cars, were behind it.

Porteous, armed as at Rouen with his watering-cans and brooms, superintended preliminary cleanliness. The antique kitchen-range and boilers worked against time. . . . Meanwhile Master, with the taxi, was making the fortunes of every vendor of foodstuffs in the place. Butchers, requested to supply 150 lb. of meat at once, if not sooner, shrugged their shoulders impotently. Bakers, their daily output permitting of but a few loaves in excess of average demand, shouted their astonishment. A rapid door-to-door visitation became necessary. The taxi-cab soon presented the appearance of a travelling provision shop. Bread, meat, vegetables, brooms, and what not, bulged from every outlet. Payment was made by means of requisitions on the British Paymaster, which were met

when presented by the tradesmen.

Chalk labels upon the stately doors proclaimed the various wards. These were for "Lying," "Sitting," and "Medical" Cases. Stretchers in neat rows lay everywhere. An office, surgery, dispensary, steward's store, and pack store, each arranged by its foreordained satellites, vied with each other. A few tents in the great garden accommodated the personnel. The officers found a room below-stairs which had apparently been the Archdeacon's office. It served as a mess-room.

The report that wounded were quickly expected proved no myth. They came in hundreds. Transport appeared on the scene wending its way from the station. Ambulance trains, *en route* from the firing line above Paris, paused to fill any still empty berths, and resumed the journey to Nantes. We filled the empty berths with those fit to travel, and removed others too bad to proceed. Later, another Clearing Hospital arranged an aid post at the station. Order was developing out of chaos.

At nightfall there was a pause. Some of us ventured forth to an estaminet to dine. Porteous remained on duty. What exactly happened during our absence it is difficult to portray. Imagination, however, can fill in detail. The Stationary Hospital on its way with all its elaborate equipment to carry on the work we had begun needed Nursing Sisters. Some twenty of these

ladies had been unexpectedly captured at the railway station and despatched, in anticipation, to the palace. Porteous, comfortable in pyjamas after a wearisome day, was awakened to show them where they were to sleep. His views on women were at that time somewhat straitened. An excitable young nurse, seeking a home in the attic in the dark, gave vent to despair.

"This is hell!" she cried.

"No — not hell," growled Porteous, "only war."

The Stationary Hospital arrived next day. We helped them in, then inspected their beds, white sheets, attendant sisters, and general orderliness with mingled feelings. We were no longer wanted. Ours was pioneer work. We packed our equipment, then set to work to arrange a sail-bath in the garden for the men. An enormous tarpaulin was available, and the Sappers laid on a water-pipe. Our men washed and basked in the sun. We officers waited impatiently for orders.

There are several large barracks in Le Mans. Artillery and infantry recruits swarmed in all of them. British detachments, awaiting disposal, occupied vacant barrack-rooms, where obtainable. A field ambulance, collecting itself after the scramble back from Le Cateau, waited for orders to entrain once more for the Front. Staff officers sought new offices for their *entourage*. The hotels in the grand square were assailed by occupants of motor-cars. Rich French ref-

ugees, Americans unexpectedly robbed of their summer tour, grass-widows of French officers — in fact, a cosmopolitan nomadic gathering — thronged the square. Cafés were making profits incalculable; shops had never before done such business.

The gardens of the old palace had been superb. The weed-grown walks savoured of the romance of centuries. It was still very charming in its wildness. Vines denuded of fruit still clung to warm bricks. Avenues of giant trees afforded cool seclusion from the world. One could readily imagine that the Archbishops of Le Mans in their days of power had not unduly denied themselves. Day by day we enjoyed the calm repose and peace of the spot until six days had passed. We were hourly growing more restless. We knew that it was the calm before the storm.

The order, as usual, came suddenly. We hurriedly marched to the station at 9 P.M. on September 8th. Four goods trucks awaited our equipment. The train, however, did not eventually leave until 1 A.M. What with troops, ammunition, and supplies moving up, and ambulance trains returning, traffic congestion was only to be expected.

As usual, we could not know our destination. Master was told "Railhead." Where that was nobody seemed to know. For twenty-four hours, however, we cared not where we went, for the journey through Versailles round the south of Paris was exquisitely beautiful.

The weather was broiling hot. Orchards of fruit trees, laden surely as no other fruit trees have ever been, met our eyes at every turn. The train did not hurry. There was ample time to study every feature of the landscape. Of war, except for the plaudits from village railway stations, there was no sign.

It was evening when Villeneuve St George was reached. Villeneuve Triage, a "Distributing Station," was only about three miles farther on. We awaited our orders for railhead with excited interest. Where was our next effort to take place?

Villeneuve Triage can be likened to Clapham Junction in every detail except regularity. A network of railway lines, enormous sheds, and the yells of whistles, met us at every turn. There was an office stuffed with R.T.O.'s. These, one and all, professed a supreme ignorance of where railhead was.

Our trucks were side-tracked while Master harried the office.

Telephones buzzed, officers of different degrees of exalted position came, pondered, and slipped away into the darkness.

It was obvious that we were badly needed somewhere; but where? In a rapid advance railhead changed daily. The only way seemed to be to go on with the supply train and see.

The importunate widow plan of attack eventually succeeded. It had, however, taken until 2 A.M. to do it. There were

three railheads, to be fed like the rays of a fan through Villeneuve. With hope of immediate work again before us, we succeeded in coupling our trucks to the stern of the huge supply train. Having learned the usefulness of personal direct force being brought to bear upon the drivers of shunting engines and brakesmen, we followed these personages about the rails until the work was done.

Daylight brought us to Chaumes. It was at first sight a charming little place, as free from war's alarms as a countryside station in Devon. The other two railheads farther on were Marles and Tournan.

The division of men and equipment, so as to provide three separate sets of everything, was soon accomplished. Florrs with his detachment was ordered to Tournan. The Boy departed for Marles. Master, with Porteous and Mackenzie, remained at Chaumes — headquarters. Macfadden, who had left Rouen with the party for a destination unknown, was discovered by wire to be at Lieusant, conducting a first-aid post. It was all part and parcel of a Clearing Hospital. Our tentacles were to "clear."

We separated in sorrow. The unit was becoming like the ten little niggers. If we divided much more we should cease to exist as a unit. Each detachment chose the railway station as its location. Porteous at Chaumes set to work to sprinkle the goods shed with antiseptic. Master worked out

plans for keeping in touch with his tentacles.

A party of German Uhlans arrived—the first seen since the war began. Several richly shelled captured German guns reposed outside the station. They had been brought in the day before. The prisoners, looked in the waiting-room, excited much adverse criticism from the villagers. Later in the day the Army Service Corps supply party, not given to sentiment, saw practical value in Uhlans. Consequently the latter were soon at work loading up an empty supply train with boxes, in the heat of the afternoon, whilst the A.S.C. superintended.

An empty supply column, seeking supplies for the morrow, brought back no wounded. "Railhead," they asserted, was moving on. Master looked perturbed. Porteous, his shed clean and asking for work, rubbed his forehead reflectively. Where was the war? Apparently it had outdistanced us. Master wired tentacles. They replied that they also were resting in anticipation.

A party of refugees in a field provided an interest in life for the time being. A few wounded which had drifted in on lorries required milk. Master looked about him. The houses of the village claimed to have nothing. The refugees, however, encamped like gypsies in a field, had cows and horses. A bottle of milk was forthcoming at once. The process of purchase led to converse. Inadvertently, Master touched upon "Madame's" hobby. It

was children. With smiling faces—from grown daughter to baby—they crowded about her to prove her words. She had nineteen. Master expressed doubt. In an instant a book was produced from a hidden pocket. In it were two pages marked off in sections and stamped by the *Maire*. Each section advertised the name and birthdate of a child. There were twenty sections in the book, and only one remained blank. Madame's pride forbade delicacy. That the twentieth space was due to be filled within a couple of months she proclaimed to all who cared to listen!

The night was as peaceful as the day. One of the trucks, drawn in to a siding, was our bedroom. Our kitchen was outside by the rails.

At 7 A.M. news reached us that the railheads had been moved from Marles to Montserf and from Tournan to Coulommiers. Chaumes still remained the Cavalry Supply railhead. An ambulance train loaded higher up halted *en route*. Its wounded were extremely cheerful. The famous Uhlans met by our cavalry in a charge had been routed with ease. What did wounds matter under such circumstances?

Master lost no time. The stationmaster was promptly persuaded to get his wires in action, and Florrs and the Boy received orders to shift at once.

It was noon before the Medical Staff officer arrived. The news that we were still rapidly advancing towards the river

Marne was confirmed. The new railhead for us all was Coulommiers.

Master gave explicit orders to the stationmaster to stop the first train passing through and attach our trucks to it. He explained that the matter was urgent. Stationmaster, polite and voluble, promised. No wounded arriving to detain us, our trucks were loaded in readiness for instant departure. Coulommiers needed us badly.

About 2 o'clock a train dashed gaily through the station. Master's language was strong, but just. He waved his arms in a futile attempt to recall it. The stationmaster humbly apologised, shrugged his shoulders, and fled. He had been in his office and had not been advised of the advent of the train.

Master saw to it himself that he caught the next train. It was 3.30. Reaching Montcoerf, we saw the Boy on the platform

with his detachment paraded ready for departure. Alongside of him was another complete Clearing Hospital, likewise ready. The train made no effort even to slow down. Expostulations at the next station were found to procure no practical results. A wire to the Boy to do his best to follow was the only course.

The journey that afternoon was through very beautiful country. Here and there a dead horse, cut telegraph wires, an unroofed cottage or a deserted village, proclaimed recent occupation of the enemy. Otherwise, all was still. That calm soft evening of September will never be forgotten. The contrast between it and the coming night was destined to be so great, the tide of war to which we were momentarily growing nearer was awaiting us in such unexpected volume, that we look back upon Coulommiers railway station with horror.

CHAPTER V.—COULOMMIERS.

Florrs had arrived first, so also had an ambulance train. A large station-house, used as a dwelling by the station staff, was already filled with wounded. With these Florrs and his men had been struggling most of the afternoon. He welcomed our arrival with intense relief.

He set to at once to load the train. When this had steamed off we were left to face the future alone. We had no time to spare. The station waiting-rooms and

offices were already filled with mattresses left by the French. We annexed every inch of space. The building made two wards; the office between served as a mortuary. In the station-yard our cooks arranged their kitchen. The railway house remained as the storerooms.

Motor-lorries continued to arrive at short intervals. All were laden with wounded lying on straw. Every one had orders to disgorge its load upon the Clearing Hospital

and depart immediately to load up with food. Ammunition and supplies in war take precedence of the wounded. This to the uninitiated may sound brutal. It is, however, a stern necessity. By delaying operations hundreds of lives may be needlessly sacrificed. Wounded are no use in the scheme of coming events, therefore wounded must give way. For us to say that our accommodation was already over-full would, we knew, be of no avail. The responsibility of providing unlimited accommodation was ours. The presence in the town of a civil hospital provided with an operating theatre was discovered. It was very small, but valuable.

The station was quickly filled. Night fell. Every one worked with at least three hands. At some hour Champion diffidently appeared to say that he had prepared dinner for the officers in our living truck, which had been side-tracked. Needless to say, there was no time for dinner. An energetic medical officer seized a café opposite the station. To this was annexed a sort of booth concert-hall filled with chairs, and in went straw. The café billiard-tables provided excellent beds.

Hot bovril and milk were served to all. The platform in the goods-shed, used in peace for laying luggage on, served as a dressing-table for serious cases. The night wore on, and still the wounded came. The reek of blood, the cries of those for whom morphia could be the only

help rent the air. A chaplain could not dress wounds, but he could fetch and carry; and he did.

A Highlander, his kilt rolled up under his head for a pillow, called out incessantly; a guardsman, with magnificent courage, faced death from a frightful wound without a murmur during all the hours of that dreadful night. The latter quietly said he supposed his day had come, and there was no use complaining; his wife and family were somewhere in Chelsea. Here one moaned for water; there another, more knowledgeable, begged for opium.

A horde of prisoners arrived—some slightly wounded, some at the point of death. A German captain was given a billiard-table bed amongst his own people. He looked about him in wonder. "How terrible! How terrible!" he kept on repeating.

Later, the number of slightly wounded prisoners threatened to flood us out. Another shed, some way down the line, was acquired. One R.A.M.C. sergeant with a small guard led some sixty of the prisoners there, and was left to do as best he could with them. His best must have suited his captives admirably, for in the morning a full-sized cheese and a box of ration biscuits, left in the shed by the A.S.C., looked as if an army of rats had worried them for a week.

The cooks never ceased to make soup. The officers worked independently and steadily. There was little time for con-

sultation. In the night Master sought out the trucks in search of some further equipment. They had disappeared.

The stationmaster was summoned. With a lantern, Master and he hunted up and down every siding. Rumour reported that an engine had taken the trucks beyond the station. The stationmaster, shrugging his shoulders, explained how ridiculously impossible that statement was. "Was not the line beyond the station in the danger zone? What engine-driver would be so mad?" Master grew sarcastic. "Can a train fly? If not in the yard, where is it?" he shouted. It was not until morning's light disclosed the trucks, well beyond the station towards the German lines, with Mackenzie's leonine countenance suffused with wrath, haranguing the engine-driver, that the mystery was explained. Germans or no Germans, the engine-driver, true to his nature, had been determined to provoke trouble.

The Boy and his party did not reach us until noon next day. With him appeared a welcome ambulance train. A section of a Field Ambulance also arrived from somewhere, and took charge of the café with its accommodation for slightly wounded. We gave them plenty to work with for the short time they stayed.

It was 2 A.M. on the second night. Sleep was a luxury of long ago. A message buzzed on the wires for help from some station six kilometres nearer the Marne. Wounded were collecting there. The Boy and

ten men departed at once. It was 7 A.M. before they returned with half a hundred wounded. The total that night was 101, and an ambulance train relieved us of even those in the morning.

The work began to slacken. Evidently the advance was continuing. A little sleep in the afternoon proved beneficial. Master and Mackenzie, armed with money, started forth to exploit the possibilities of the town regarding champagne and groceries for the patients.

Some of the shops were open, most of them not. From appearance, one would have imagined that such a precious thing as champagne was not to be found. That the Germans had occupied the town would have explained much. That the Germans, however, were hurried was apparent by the fact that the shopkeepers, diving into their cellars, unearthed many delectable articles which the Hun would have highly prized.

The improvised wards were cleaned and garnished; cooks prepared fresh supplies; the staff had time to smoke and smile. From a civil hospital point of view the place looked ridiculously crude and inadequate. We had, however, learned the value of essentials as opposed to show.

The untutored mind imagines that a wounded man must, of necessity, be fallen upon and have his wounds dressed and prodded at sight. Experience teaches that ninety - nine wounded men (who have, of course, already received first aid) need their stomachs filled

and a bed to rest on before all else. Most of them have gone through strenuous work before being wounded, and wish, above all things, to sleep.

An inspection of that little hospital inside proved that essentials were there. Outside, steaming pots of bully beef, and bovril, and fresh vegetables, attested to preparation for the inner man of any number who cared to eat. An officer of the French staff came and looked, then apparently went away and talked. His words of appreciation reaching us later surprised us. We were unaware that we had been playing to a gallery.

The lull did not last long. At 7 o'clock Florrs had to throw himself and his share of stuff into a train at the last moment to succour wounded at Boisy. A trio of coquettish French nurses welcomed him on the train with such empressement, that Porteous, pausing in his work, snorted with vigorous comment.

That night, with our depleted staff, tried us almost to a standstill. Supply lorries in never-ending convoys arrived at all hours. But a welcome train relieved us of 177 at breakfast-time. Then came the usual lull.

During the day an urgent call over the wires for help from Florrs reached us. An improvised train was hastily got together and pushed off. It returned at 9 P.M. filled with wounded. Amongst them were twenty-four Germans, who were shunted in their trucks to a siding. The goods-shed with

the other Germans, our sergeant, and the cheese were still "going strong." The cheese had, however, been supplemented by bully beef.

The prisoners begged us to keep them and not hand them over to the French. We were softer-hearted then than later, also more foolish than the French. We also had not learned that a German soldier is always hungry. His appetite is, in fact, ferocious.

A train arrived the following day, relieving us of 120 cases, but left 30 wounded Germans until the next trip. We had not an unlimited supply of feeding bowls. One large bowl, filled to the brim with stew, was placed between two adjacent stretchers occupied by Huns, and each was given a large spoon. The effect was truly interesting. Any trace whatever of unselfish brotherly love failed to catch the eye. At the word "go," the competitors started as if every mouthful meant salvation. There was plenty more in the pot, but presumably they were unaware of that.

A German hospital-sergeant, wearing a Browning pistol, was ordered by Master to hand over his weapon. He stated that it was his private property. Master spoke words polite, but unanswerable. German-like, however, the owner never forgot his own interests. He promptly offered the pistol to Master as a personal gift—with the naïve request that it should be returned at the end of the war. For the latter purpose his home address was

carefully written out and solemnly deposited in Master's pocket-book. It is not probable that he will receive that revolver at the end of the war!

The General Headquarters of the Army had departed. The little town of Coulommiers was rapidly resuscitating. Seated at lunch in our horse-truck, shunted far away from the mob, we were enjoying calm repose, and anticipating a rest which our conscience told us we had earned.

Florrs settled down to sleep. Porteous, smiling urbanely, cleaned a well-coloured pipe. The Boy was dreaming of things that only he and she could know. Master was snatching an hour to write up his official diary.

Suddenly Champion challenged an orderly who stood in the track presenting an envelope. Master tore the paper open, grasped the contents, and wiped a moist forehead.

"Does any one know where Fere-en-Tardenois is?" he asked wearily. "The trains cannot get across the river. Bridge

has been blown up. There are three motor-lorries coming for us. We have to leave our trucks and load our stuff and ourselves on the lorries, and find Fere-en-Tardenois by road. General Headquarters is there."

"What about the patients still here?" inquired Florrs blankly.

"A party will have to stay with them and follow on as best they can to-morrow," replied Master. "That will be your job, Porteous."

We did not prepare without groans. The sergeant-major's whistle, however, dispelling hesitation, dragged the men from their lairs. The men quickly settled to the work. All equipment not actually required to be left with Porteous was packed and stacked in readiness for the lorries. The men were becoming more expert with each move. We had landed in France on August 19th. It was September 13th only. The time seemed six times as long. A week's work compressed into four-and-twenty hours is inclined to have that effect.

(To be continued.)

SOME HUMOURS OF HOUSEKEEPING IN RHODESIA.

A CANADIAN friend of mine, who was much interested in promoting the emigration of educated women to the Dominions, used to say that they suffered chiefly from the lack of a sense of proportion. The fact of the matter is, that when one changes one's continent one must also be prepared for a wholesale revaluation of the things of daily life. Fortunately for me, I took up a household which had already been run for some years by another Englishwoman, and found many comforts which would otherwise have been lacking; but no amount of ingenuity can surmount the fact that one has no water laid on—it must be fetched in buckets about half a mile—no kitchen sink, no store-room, no cupboards, no larder—none of the conveniences which the most “general” of cooks at home would think indispensable, while our domestics are but one remove from primitive savages. Yet it is possible to evolve a scheme of existence which, while providing comfort, does not leave out the amenities. It is possible that one's meals should not only be eatable (modesty, as I am chief cook, prevents me from saying more than that!) but decently served. The first thing is to decide what are essentials, and here comes in the need for a sense of proportion.

Woman, I discover, is not indispensable to a man's com-

fort in Rhodesia. With the intelligent and adaptable native to minister to his wants, the bachelor can achieve a considerable degree of comfort of a rude kind, and is able to indulge to the full in all sorts of slack habits specially induced by the African climate. Shaving at long intervals, pyjamas all Sunday, smoking *ad lib.* in bed, with breakfast at all hours—these are some of the indulgences which a wife may be expected to interfere with, and which must be balanced against the delights of matrimony. The African bachelor is never driven into marriage by the monotony of having to do his own washing up! The more necessary is a sense of proportion for the new and reforming wife. The worst of it is that a sense of proportion which worked infallibly in Kensington or Mayfair may be hopelessly at fault in mid-Africa. One needs a sort of graduated scale for every mile that takes one away from what is politely called “civilisation.” Perhaps a sense of humour is a good substitute, and this one certainly wants in ratio as one gets farther and farther from the ready-made world and deeper and deeper into the world where one must make everything for oneself—food, drink, amusements, comforts, all the things that seem to be laid on like the electric light at home.

Now, I don't want to be impolite to this neighbourhood,

so I will leave the readers to decide for themselves where to place us in the scale of civilisation. We are 165 miles from a railway, an English church, a bank, or a public-house. Our nearest telephone (which, through the telegraph, links us with the outside world) is twenty miles away. We get a post once a week, rather well cooked, from having come a day's journey on the head of a native runner. We have no golf links. We have no race-course—indeed (owing to the prevalence of horse-sickness) only plutocrats and police have horses. The rest of us travel slowly and laboriously on donkeys. A few have mules. The best one can say for a mule is that it is not a donkey.

It would be misleading to say that all these things only dawned on me by degrees—they had been described before, but things seen and felt are much more actual than things heard. Withal I had heard for months past the praises of my predecessor in this particular cook-housekeeper job, and when I expressed any misgivings as to my own qualifications, I was reassuringly told (for instance) that “no woman ever could make bread properly.” Evidently a high standard is expected. Thus I took the reins with much trepidation. In the first place, I did not understand a word of the language spoken in the kitchen. This is an abominable bastard between Zulu, English, and Dutch, known all over South Africa as “Kitchen Kafir.” It consists of a number of words

strung together without any attempt at grammar, inflection, or syntax. Zulu itself is one of the most thoroughly inflected languages existing. The governing noun in a sentence affects the form of practically every other part in it, and the eight classes of nouns have each their particular pronouns both for singular and plural. In Kitchen Kafir, on the contrary, we talk like children about “Me go,” or “Him have.” “Me,” “You,” and “him” or “it” being our only pronouns. Other words, rich in Zulu synonyms, are worked to death; as for instance the verb *kukisa*, which means “to boil.” We use this shamelessly for every kind and degree of cooking, although there are twelve native words for different kinds of boiling alone; I even tell my boy to get me “kukile” fruit, when I mean ripe fruit, and he understands, though he might well pity the poverty of my vocabulary. The classic story, however, is of a lady who addressed the following order to the servant in charge of her child. (The word “kumkum,” it must be mentioned, means “rain.”) “Take the picanin baby out, and if the kumkum comes, come back!” As a matter of fact Kitchen Kafir is evidently regarded by natives as the language of the upper ten, probably because it is learnt at the mines, whence the younger generation returns with all sorts of iconoclastic ideas and some money. I have heard boys addressed in fluent Zulu reply in Kitchen Kafir. Of

course Zulu is not their original native tongue, which varies slightly, and is called in this district Chindau. But the grown men always seem to understand Zulu, and only the women and picanins talk Chindau.

With all these tongues humming round me I could not understand a word, and the hopelessness of the feeling has to be experienced to be believed, because, besides the house servants, there is a constant coming and going of farm boys, and one longed to know what was going on and what all the talk was about. A boy would come up and ask for the "Inkoos" (master). Thus much I could understand. Then he would plunge into a long history, evidently of the most absorbing interest. Probably Inkoos would fly into a royal rage, and deliver an ultimatum of some sort in a dramatic manner, but what it was all about I could tell no more than the man in the moon. It was intensely aggravating.

But even more humiliating was my position in the kitchen—nominally my own domain, but really owned by various small black people, who did what seemed right in their own eyes, and carried on conversations and made jokes in my presence with an all too evident assumption that as I was unable to communicate with them they need not bother about me. Not that they were rude; their natural manners are good, and they stand too much in awe of the "Inkoos," but they could not be expected

to be more tolerant than the historic old gentleman who complained that the natives of France didn't understand their own language!

I remember one day at this stage of my experiences how my husband brought a neighbour to the verandah at about eleven o'clock, the hour at which all South Africans drink tea or coffee, and said, with the diffidence of the newly married, "Can we have some tea?" To which I replied, "Of course," with well-assumed confidence. We do not permit ourselves this pernicious indulgence, thinking that tea twice and coffee twice a day are quite enough. I hurried to the kitchen. The fire was dead out, of course—I had expected that,—Ben and Pungewa were conspicuous by their absence, and the water-barrel was empty. This appeared to me to be a suitable problem for those ladies' papers which have a column for questions on social behaviour. Would Lady Clara Vere de Vere under similar circumstances return gracefully to the verandah with a bland *non possumus*, or would she, by brilliant conversation, distract her guest's attention from his tealess condition? For the first I had not the pluck; the second, alas! was debarred for the simple reason that the visitor was Dutch and did not speak a word of any language known to me. A third, and very attractive alternative, was to go out for a long walk. I forget what I actually did, but the proper course, as I know now, was

to shout for Ben with all the power of my lungs, and to lay upon him the onus of producing fire and water, remembering that this is Africa, and the chance of our guest being in any hurry is remote.

But these were the days before I had established an understanding with Ben, when we were still groping in the dark as to each other's meaning. Ben is a full-grown "boy," aged about twenty, but he is very small and neatly made, whereas the natives round here are usually tall and often heavily built. Ben is a Christian, and sings hymns as he turns the handle of the cream separator every morning. They are very dismal hymns, and he sings them alternately in a high falsetto or a nasal tenor. Sometimes he sings "God save the King." I listened the other day, for some time, thinking "I know that tune. What is it?" He wears a shirt and knickers, instead of the heathen costume of a vest (locally known as "sokkis") reaching to the waist, and leaving the stomach bare, and a "foya," or gaily-coloured cloth, fastened round the loins with the two ends hanging in points on either side. I do not think, however, that there is any bigotry about the question of dress. There is a pair of some one's old riding breeches on the farm, of ultra-sporting cut, and they appear to be communal property; every boy has a turn at them. Trousers are evidently "coming in." On Sunday the village bucks may

turn out in a tight white suit, puttees and brown boots, with a green "Trilby" hat on top. Ben is a smart little chap in his workaday clothes, but when he is on leave he wears a pair of dark trousers much too long for him, large brown boots, and a "silver"-handled umbrella. It has taken me many months to convince Ben that I provide him with neat clothes, and soap to wash them with, in order that I may see him clean and tidy. *His* idea was to save up these things until he went on "fagash" ("holiday" or "visit").

Ben, in this country where boys usually only work for six months at a time, is an old retainer. He came to my husband more than a year ago, stayed with the S.'s while he went home, and met us when we arrived at the riding stage of our journey here. He says he wants to stay, and he gets 12s. per month. Last month he asked for a rise. Thank goodness the Inkoos deals with such matters! I should never have dared to refuse, but the Inkoos knows better. Ben is to advance, but "*festina lente!*"—we will talk about the rise in another three months' time.

But if Ben is an old retainer, his assistants are the reverse. In engaging a housemaid here one is almost as much at a disadvantage as in a London registry office, where the housemaid engages *you*, and may stay if you suit her. Here the term of service is settled, and is never more than six months. There is a village on this farm, whose inhabitants pay no rent,

and enjoy all the rights of occupation in return for the obligation to supply a certain amount of labour—not free, but for the current wages. Two girls to wash and iron, and one or two for the house, are part of the bargain, and it is amusing to note that they come as a sort of favour, and often very unwillingly. At first, when Pungewa, the “housemaid” I inherited, finished her time and left, no girl was forthcoming for me, and it was only by the threat of wholesale eviction that a very sulky little damsel was at length produced. Her father is the village oracle, jester, and orator. One has often met his counterpart in what I was going to call “real life,”—the kind of man who loves greetings in the marketplace. George, for that is his name, will walk ever so far out of his way in order to give one a salute and say, with the raised hand which younger natives are ceasing to use, “Morrow, ’Nkosikas!” In the fields George entertains with a flow of jocular conversation, and when the Inkoos maliciously sent him to work all by himself, he bore it for one day only and then came to complain. The occasion of the impressment of his child was a unique opportunity for George, and he harangued us by the yard on the disobedience of the younger generation, for, according to him, it was the little girl herself who refused to come. “Beat her,” suggested the Inkoos, knowing well that they

never beat their children, even for serious faults. “If I beat her, ’Nkoos,” says George, “she will run away.”

The second day of her service she said she had “a snake in her stomach,” and asked to go home. If a black person says they are sick, one cannot safely contradict them, and as they enjoy the most nauseous medicine there is no means of detecting malingering. After three days we ordered Mashua’s return. George came up and said she was nursing her sick mother. We were adamant; so George washed his hands of the matter, and the sick mother, forgetting her rôle, appeared in person and said Mashua was nursing a sick baby. She sat on the ground and did the pathetic for quite a long time; but we were still adamant—Mashua must work, or the whole family must leave the farm. Next day she came back, accompanied by her fond papa, who delivered a harangue to the effect that he had demonstrated his loyalty and devotion by bringing me his child, and then (turning to her, and speaking in Kitchen Kafir so that I should understand) he gave her a lecture on the duties of small girls who work for kind ladies! As a matter of fact, parents put every obstacle in the way of their picanins going out to work, for they lose their labour, and the small people keep their own earnings. The work is light and the food abundant, and they invariably improve in appearance. Mashua is bursting on every side

out of the frock that was big when she came.

Mashua sulked for a fortnight, and then I lost my patience and boxed her ears! I never recollect boxing any one's ears in my life before. It relieved my feelings mightily. She ran outside the kitchen and stood with her face to the wall for quite a long time, twisting her fingers together, her funny black face working. She is about eleven years old, and well-grown and fat, with perfectly shaped arms and legs like gateposts. There are many shades of colour round here, and some natives are copper-brown and have straight noses and well-shaped skulls. But Mashua is black, and when she is cross or sleepy she gets blacker. She wears a horrid little blue cotton frock which I made her, and in which she is the ugliest little slavey imaginable. In her own dress of a kilted petticoat striped with red and sewn all over with pearl buttons, a gaily patterned cloth draped under one bare shoulder and over the other, and a perfect regalia of bead necklaces and copper anklets and bracelets, Mashua is really far from plain, and she is actually beloved of a most eligible *parti*—the waggon-driver of a neighbour. She is, as a matter of fact, sold to this man, and will be his wife as soon as she is old enough, and as soon as he completes the *lobola*, or wife price. It is customary to pay something down in advance while the girl is a baby, and

this constitutes a hold on her father. But he really courts her all the same, bringing her gifts whenever he takes the waggon into town, and coming to see her every Sunday. He has even asked me to do a photograph of her for him! But, of course, I did not know all this when I boxed her ears. When she recovered from the surprise she was as meek as possible, and she steadily improved from that time, until now she is really an infant prodigy. What English child of that age could make a double bed or lay a table, or be trusted to carry trays of china and wash them?

It will be observed that I had passed beyond the deaf and dumb stage before the advent of Mashua. It lasted less than a month after I was thrown on my own resources. I "swotted" up Kitchen Kafir, and no sooner had I done so than I was sorry, for now I am trying to learn Zulu, and with this horrid jargon on the tip of my tongue I am no longer spurred by the necessity which is the best of all language teachers. I have also a Chindau vocabulary, and every now and then I trot out a word or two, with the result that Ben and Mashua are not at all sure that I could not talk their lingo if I liked! They never talk to each other in my presence now, or if they do, it is in the lowest tones. Nor do they swiftly and suddenly vanish away, as was their wont, since they have learnt that there are certain tasks which come in regular

rotation, and that it is the better part of wisdom to do them at once. We have our conventions, of course. In London my maids used to call going out for a gossip "Taking the dog for a run." Here Mashua goes to "look for eggs." The hens roam all over the garden and round the pig- and cattle-kraals, and they lay their eggs anywhere except in the nice nests provided for them. I found one in the guest-room bed recently, and two in our dressing-room this morning!

With a small enamel basin on her head, and her hands clasped behind her back, Mashua wanders out of sight every afternoon about four o'clock, and returns only when the sun has set and the brief twilight is dwindling to darkness. It is contrary to etiquette for her to run when I can see her, or if I call her. She moves her thick legs as if they were stiff. But once or twice I have caught a glimpse of her running like a hare, and when I am not in the kitchen I hear her quick eager voice and gurgles of laughter. I never saw her smile at first, but one day Ben upset a whole panful of hot water on the floor, and I called to her to mind her feet. She took one spring into the wood-box and burst into the merriest, childish laugh, and ever since then she has forgotten to be solemn and slow, in order to keep up her protest against being made to work. She would probably have to do much harder work at home,

and when pay-day comes no drunken parent collects her shillings. She is free to spend them at the store, and does so spend them, buying white limbo, gay *foyas*, and beads of every colour. Last month she bought an umbrella, spurred to emulate Ben. During a heavy shower I saw her returning from the wood pile, a bundle of wood on her head, and the umbrella held as much higher than the wood as her arms would reach.

To appreciate one's real inferiority in the things that matter out here one has only to watch the dealings of the native with fire. We have only partially tamed Fire, and he is always getting out of hand with us. But the black man has him in thrall. A little heap of wood, a few white ashes—the fire is dead, we say. But the black man pulls the wood together, sticks a wisp of dry grass into it, blows—and behold, a crackling, blazing fire. Fire does not burn the black skin as it does ours—at least, Mashua, bidden to make a fire in another room, just picks a flaming brand from the kitchen stove, places it on a flat bit of wood, and walks calmly off with them. She arranges the blazing logs with her bare hands, and should she happen to tread on a live spark with her bare feet, is apparently quite unconscious.

Nor do poisons affect the stomachs inside the black skins in the same way that they do our own more delicate organs. There is a kind of native marrow which the women bring,

and which are usually quite nice eating. On one never-to-be-forgotten occasion, however, the first mouthful I took had such a bitter taste that to swallow it was impossible. It was like concentrated essence of quinine. Even the small quantity of juice that went down proved a poison so strong that I was ill for twenty-four hours. My husband swallowed one small piece, which acted as such a powerful emetic that he got rid of the poison immediately; but Ben, summoned to account for having served a vegetable which he ought to have recognised as poisonous, chewed a bit of it meditatively, remarked that it was like "muti" (medicine), and that some marrows were bad, some good, and apparently felt no evil effects!

It is part of the duties of a housewife to dispense "muti" to the sick, and I used to wonder at first how I should diagnose their complaints. I need not have worried. Our pharmacopœia does not permit of very varied treatment. There are two recognised kinds of illness—pain in the head, usually indicated by tying a string tightly round the affected part, and "inyorka" (a snake) in the stomach. It is etiquette to locate the disease, but the treatment is identical—a whacking big dose of Epsom salts, in warm water, drunk on the premises. Occasionally a sort of tucked-up appearance suggests fever, and then we give quinine; and I had one picanin who had to be regularly dosed with calomel and

quinine. I gave orders that he was to have no solids (his temperature being over 100), and sent him milk and broth; but this treatment seems to a native like putting him to death—without solid food he is sure he will dwindle and die. So the little boy's father removed him from my jurisdiction.

"Muti," by the way, is the Kitchen Kafir word for all sorts of things. My boots are cleaned with "muti," and so is the kitchen stove. Bicarbonate of soda, as used in cooking, is "muti," furniture polish is "muti," and when Mashua's young man was trying to explain that he wanted me to take a photograph of her, he said (with appropriate gestures) that he wanted me to look, look, look, and then put it on a little piece of paper with "muti." I may mention that, as far as cleaning materials are concerned, Ben shares with European servants of my acquaintances a profound belief in the efficacy of "muti," and lays it on with a trowel, regardless that the nearest source of supply is several days' journey away. I am forever telling him "Bitjaan! Bitjaan!" (a little)—another hard-worked word. Recently we asked one of the boys who had asked for leave to go and see about a new wife whether he were married yet, and he replied, "Bitjaan, 'Nkosikas!"

Speaking of our distance from supplies brings me to a side of the housekeeping here which is far less difficult than I had supposed. I, who had never kept house more than a

few minutes' walk from Kensington High Street, or without a telephone, must now think for months ahead, for it is only when a neighbouring waggon is going in to Umtali, 165 miles away, that anything weighing more than a pound or two can be got. But we are self-supporting to no ordinary degree. Our bread is made from wheat grown and ground on the farm, with a percentage only of fine flour; we have our own butter, eggs, bacon, ham, sausages, and brawn. The garden supplies vegetables, and for fruit we have in their due seasons oranges, lemons (all the year round), guavas, bananas, passion fruit, pine-apples, and paw-paws. Apples, plums, and other temperate fruits are a chancy crop, but the first-named are plentiful. For meat we have several kinds of buck, which are excellent eating, also guinea-fowl, and a small pheasant. Every now and then some one kills a fat beast, and part of a sheep can often be bought. The only difficulty is that these things cannot be had in small quantities. To get a mutton chop one must kill a sheep, and the beef we all enjoy once or twice palls terribly as piece after piece comes out of the salt-barrel, and we eat, like the old Scots family who ate, "Up one side and down the other—from chine to rump and from rump to chine," during the long winter when fresh meat was unprocurable. There is always, of course, the indispensable fowl, and the native variety (much modified

by interbreeding with imported stock) is a tender and toothsome little bird. We drink locally-grown coffee, or a beverage known as "honey-beer." Commercially we have not advanced much beyond the barter stage, and the man who has some spare cartridges (very rare just now) will exchange them for a ham, and will get coffee in exchange for two small pigs.

Having inherited a well-filled store cupboard I have not had many contretemps, but on one occasion, when our "county family" came on a visit, the worst happened. "The worst" is to run out of bread. They upset my calculations by arriving either too soon or too early—I forget which. The bread which ought to have seen us through vanished too quickly, and when I dived into the kitchen to improvise a substitute in the shape of a baking-powder loaf, I found that the tin which I had so confidently expected to hold baking powder was empty! Somewhere I knew that I had a recipe for scones made with carbonate of soda and cream of tartar, but could I find that recipe? It hid itself from me for some agitating moments—then Eureka! I was saved.

Most people in these parts have a simple way of meeting all such deficiencies. The principal crop here is the mealie, and mealie porridge is the staple food. When in doubt—play mealie porridge; that is the golden rule for the housewife. It tastes rather

like a very insipid milk pudding, and they cover it with coarse white sugar, and eat it with milk—ugh! It is cheap, wholesome, and nourishing, and to disparage it is a species of high treason, but I could not preserve my self-respect as a craftsman cook if I permitted myself to lapse into the porridge habit. Besides—I don't like it!

There are many animals to be fed besides humans. Trumps, our half-bred Zanzibar donkey, walks boldly on to the verandah for his mealies; his three wives (for he is a Mormon) and their foals merely content themselves with eating my garden borders. Fowls and chickens come fluttering round every evening when they see me with a certain basket, but no sooner have they started than "Gobble, gobble" come the turkeys, driving the smaller birds before them. A portion of porridge is served out to each of the four dogs at this hour, and the cats get what is left of that and the skim-milk. A frieze of cats and kittens sit all along the end of the verandah, and my Irish terrier has a game with them. He lies some distance off his plate and waits till they have crept up to steal, and then he suddenly dashes into their midst. The puppy, on the contrary (she is going to be as big as a leopard), gulps down as much as she can of her own food, and then wallops clumsily round trying to get a bit out of every one else's share, getting her nose well scratched in consequence. It is a more

amusing dinner party than many I have attended, although the table manners of some of the family might be improved. Still, they have their standards. It is not the correct thing to interfere with a buck which another dog has helped to bring in. My little Irishman came in last week, with the boy who was carrying the dead buck, and the big pointer, who had not been out, met them. Instantly the terrier growled and stiffened, and Dick, after a sniff or too, acquiesced, and contented himself with watching the disembowelling from afar off, although he could easily have disputed the terrier's right. Judy, the puppy, not being properly educated yet, was not so complaisant, and when growled at she simply said, "Silly old thing, do you think I mind that? Come off the roof!" Or words to that effect. And the terrier, who would not hurt his little friend, gave in in a sort of indulgent way, allowing her to lie beside him and lick the warm blood, a privilege no grown dog would have been accorded.

You see, we have no theatre to go to, so we must make our own little dramas, with black people and dogs and cats for *dramatis personæ*. There are human dramas going on, but not much comedy, for these big new countries are not a good setting for comedy; one needs a mellow atmosphere, a more mature philosophy. But I long ago came to the conclusion that dogs and cats have a strongly marked sense of humour, and

now I know that donkeys possess it also. Last month we were starting off on a little round of visits—an expedition which had involved much preparation and planning. And when I came out, ready to start, with all my domestic affairs in order, I found that Trumps had chosen that day to pay a visit to a lady friend at a distance. Suppose you were going out of town for a lovely week-end visit, and the railway people announced that all the trains had struck. Would you laugh? Well, I did. In Rhodesia, you see, there is no hurry, and nothing is more fatal to an appreciation of other people's humour than to be in a hurry.

And so, in Arcady, we cultivate a sense of proportion. We are amused at trifles, but we

know they are trifles, and if we are annoyed—why, we know our annoyances are trifles too; and once a week, when we make contact once more with that far-off world where men are fighting and working and suffering, we plunge again into the world of big things. Then the lamp burns dim as we devour page after page of printed matter, the wood-fire flickers low—it is brighter outside in the broad sheet of moonlight. And so we come back to Rhodesia, and begin to plan to-morrow's tasks, and, as Walt Whitman says—

“I do not call one greater and one smaller,
That which fills its period and place is equal to any.”

ETHEL COLQUHOUN JOLLIE.

A BIT OF ARMAGEDDON.

THE regiment had been "on active service" for a year, in a side-show which all the world knows has not been overmanned, without hearing the hum of a bullet, except when the merry townsman across the river was celebrating or disputing, and, as a necessary concomitant, firing his inevitable rifle with complete disregard for the probable destination of the bullet. Gone was the glamour which accompanies departure on service. A year's garrison duty in a Mesopotamian desert had quelled all hopes of anything better. The wag murmured as he helped himself to his usual appetiser, "Daddy, what did you do in the great war?" "My boy, I never missed my evening vermouth." Armageddon, which was familiarising the world with horrors, had left us still capable of taking an interest in a few skeletons of horses and remains of what had once been man which marked the line of the Turkish retreat of the previous year. We had figuratively beaten our swords into fly-flaps, and settled down to a resigned hate of the war and all its works, when our "campaign" arrived to cheer us. It appeared in no newspapers; it will figure in no history of the war; it will bring none of us particoloured ribbons or clasps to adorn our bosoms withal; but it was our ewe lamb, and as such we

would fain save it from "the eternal silence," if indeed it be possible.

Perhaps "the poor devils on the Tigris," then striving gallantly for the relief of Kut, envied us sometimes; but man is a notoriously discontented animal. There were certainly sand-grouse and black partridge in due season. There were some large and sporting pig at one outpost. There were fish in the river—as witness the 17 lb. mahseer which was hooked at sunset and landed amid the plaudits of the multitude at 11.45 P.M. There was the occasional chukker of polo. But these were the merest palliatives. The fact remained that life was just one — thing after another—a weary round of parades and fatigues, food and sleep, enlivened in the long hot weather by flies innumerable, heat and dust-storms infernal, mosquitoes, sandflies, scorpions, *et hoc genus omne*. As if Nature had not sufficiently endowed the place with land pests, there were even sea-sharks in the river. Monotony bred monotony, otherwise we could never have stomached those same old tunes on that same old gramophone night after night. Perhaps, as it was, the subalterns, who were *ex officio* regimental organ-grinders, appreciated them less than most; but even they felt lost without them—when it was the other fellow's turn to grind.

In fact, it was just cantonment life on short rations, so to speak, until we found that we might bar the way home of sundry Bakhtiari tribesmen who had seen as much of the Russians as they desired, and, having earned their German gold, had no further use for the war. Until they were fired upon by the squadron which was shadowing their efforts to cross the flooded Kharkheh river, they appeared to be oblivious of the fact that those traditional enemies, the Russ and the rulers of India, were now allies. Their one idea was to get home as soon as possible, for they were very short of supplies. Our business was to see that they only did so on our terms—unconditional disarmament. On our side of the river, however, they had allies in the shape of the Sagwand tribe, which was labouring under a grievance in that it was not making as much out of the war in the way of subsidies as some of its neighbours, and had partially indemnified itself by relieving H.B.M.'s Vice-Consul of a considerable sum of money and several mules. The regiment had already met some of these gentry at long range when supporting a retaliatory raid upon them by their neighbours. The Bakhtiaris were said to be fairly numerous, to be in possession of machine-guns, and to be very short of food, so there seemed every prospect of a scrap when we sallied forth from our headquarters with one squadron

and the machine-gun section to join up with the squadron stationed at "the palace which is in Shushan."

It was on the three days' march there that we encountered our worst enemy, for the first night treated us to one of those circular thunderstorms which seem to be a feature of this country, and the next day developed a first-class deluge which lasted far into the night and left us with hardly a dry rag on or off. The third day opened auspiciously with bright weather and a route over rolling grass downs carpeted with wild flowers, and affording a grand view right away to the snow-covered mountains of Persia proper. Darius and other mighty hunters before the Lord must have had great gallops over those downs. It was when we descended to cross the low ground between the Kharkheh and the Sha-ur, on the head-waters of which stood "Shushan the palace," and now stands the imposing castle of the French antiquarians engaged in research work on the site thereof, that we found ourselves in trouble. The Kharkheh had overflowed and linked up with the Sha-ur, rendering the ford over the latter impracticable. We just managed to get across this spill without swimming, but it proved a most effective obstacle to the mule convoy with our kit and rations, which were only got across after prolonged delay with the aid of killicks, the local hide rafts. The squadron meanwhile plod-

ded on, and became involved in a series of morasses, which brought horses down all over the place. Once through these, however, the rest was plain sailing to the castle at Shush, where the other squadron was. Here in durance vile we found the leader of the Bakhtiari, who had come in and surrendered, though without persuading his followers to do likewise.

In the early hours of next morning we sallied forth in search of the savage enemy. The business part of our "army" consisted of two three-troop squadrons and the machine-gun section, but it was accompanied by a host of local warriors, both mounted under the command of the galloping Vice-Consul, and on foot under no command. The latter turned out yelling and dancing and waving their rifles in the air, while the former livened up their tats for the day's work by galloping round and round and pointing their rifles at each other. Unfortunately the nearer we came to the proximity of the enemy, the less became the martial ardour of our allies, and when we eventually advanced to the attack, the gallant infantry halted a liberal two miles from the enemy's position and never approached any nearer. Very "frightful" enemies can these gentry prove themselves to a wounded man or a corpse, but they have no stomach for hard knocks. Running shots on horseback at a fugitive, and preferably unarmed, enemy is rather their *métier*.

We halted behind a large mound and sampled the cold chicken and hard-boiled eggs which constituted the day's ration, while the staff up aloft scrutinised the enemy, who were visible on the low hills at the point where the Khar-kheh river debouches into the plain. Behind these hills was the ford which the Bakhtiari were busy crossing with the help of the Sagwands. Between us and the enemy was a vast grass plain broken only by a few low mounds. To these the machine-gun section and various troops galloped off in succession, leaving one unhappy troop to hold the rear position. Meanwhile the galloping Consul made off on the right with his myrmidons to indulge with entire success his favourite pastime of having horses shot under him. History does not record at what range the machine-guns opened fire, and no one was tactless enough to measure it. Distance is amazingly deceptive in the vast spaces. However, as soon as we began to get into effective ranges, it became painfully apparent that the savage enemy was not feeling savage that morning at all. Much as he desired to cross the river, he had no stomach to fight for it, and the haste with which he retired into the hills on the far side was evidenced by the nice lot of loot he left behind, which our allies did not fail to retrieve. Meanwhile such as had already crossed, of whom there may have been a hundred, and their Sagwand friends to the number

of about a hundred and fifty, proceeded to make themselves scarce in the low hills to the north as soon as we pushed our attack. First, however, from both sides of the river they recorded their displeasure at our proceedings; but the only damage they inflicted was three wounds, of which two were very slight, and the loss of one horse, excluding those sacrificed to the zeal of H.B.M.'s Vice-Consul.

Thus ended the desperate battle of Pa-i-pul, leaving the victorious host to bivouac on the hills overlooking the ford. The position was by nature a very strong one. Had our adversary been an Afridi it would most certainly have taken us all our time to turn him out. If the Bakhtiari and the Sagwand are the stuff of which the ancient Persian hosts were made, Thermopylæ, Marathon, and Alexander lose all their ancient glamour. One's conception of the waters of Khar-kheh, which tradition says Xerxes took with him wherever he went, also suffered a rude shock. We came to the conclusion he must have used it as soup.

Before dark the adversary had entirely disappeared, and, after staying the inner man with our emergency ration, we spent the night untroubled save by a cold wind, rain, and a stampede of the horses of half a squadron, which suddenly decided unanimously that the commissariat arrangements had been inadequate, and went off with one accord to the place where they had been grazed in the evening. Next morning

the wounded were sent in to Shush, and the rest of the "army" marched off to show itself to the city of Dizful. On the way we again encountered our worst enemy, for the windows of heaven were opened indeed. When we arrived close to the Dizful Bridge, which, like all bridges in this amazing country, is broken, we were greeted by the sound of a merry fusilade. It appeared that the galloping Consul and his followers, having arrived first at the river bank, found some buffaloes with two or three herds crossing the river. These were pronounced to be fugitive Sagwands, one presumes in disguise, "lulled by the song of Circe and her wine," and a hot fire was opened upon them, in which the advance-guard presently joined. A volley of unintelligible but obviously regrettable language from the buffalo herds eventually operated as a "cease fire," and the incident closed without history having recorded whether anybody or anything had been hit.

When we reached the ruined palace on the high ground above the bridgehead we found that it had indeed just been evacuated by fugitive foemen, who were visible trekking away post-haste in the extreme distance. What was of more engrossing interest was the arrival of part of the convoy with some solid comfort for the inner man, who was beginning to need it. Some misguided enthusiasts disdained the attractions of bully beef, relying on promises of a

Persian dinner ordered from Dizful. An ever-dwindling group awaited this banquet until long after any civilised dinner hour, only to retire ultimately to ration biscuit, hard-boiled egg, and bed. Persian dinners loomed large on the menu in those days. Another was promised the next night, but we never saw it, though rumour has it that it arrived long after we were in bed, and was annexed by the Vice-Consul's following. Nothing daunted, we tried again next day, and about half-way through dinner were confronted with several gigantic pots containing a very savoury chicken pilao, sufficient to feed a regiment. This was only one course of the promised repast, but it was all we ever saw. Except for that, Persian dinners remain for most of us "such stuff as dreams are made of."

Our bivouac developed into a camp, and our activities were confined to capturing sundry

half-naked fugitives, whom the amiable Sagwand, their erstwhile ally, had looted with great thoroughness and characteristic perfidy. A morning's ride into the Sagwand country was productive of nothing but ocular demonstration that its inhabitants had flitted well out of reach. Their late chiefs had flitted farther still, doubtless wisely, knowing their own countrymen. A friendly substitute was accepted by the tribe, and the political situation was deemed to require no more manipulation *vi et armis*, so that our "campaign" was over. As we went south again, escorted by an indescribable pest of flies, we realised that the hot weather was upon us, wherein we should not even want to campaign. "And so home" to our daily hate, and the growing fear that this is all Fate is going to vouchsafe us of Armageddon.

H. P. H.

A RETREAT IN SPAIN: 1706.

I.

THE following narrative is a paraphrase and an abridgment of a manuscript found among the papers of Lieutenant-General William Hawley, better known perhaps as "Bloody" Hawley; the same who, on January 23, 1746, was defeated by Prince Charles Edward at Falkirk. The epithet and the lost battle have tarnished Hawley's reputation; and, although the latter does not concern us here, it may be remarked that probably he was less cruel and more competent than is generally supposed. He lived in a harsh age; but he was a keen and experienced soldier, who studied every branch of his profession, acquired a library of military works, kept a diary of his campaigns, and to the end retained the confidence of the Duke of Cumberland, an exacting judge of merit.

In 1706 Hawley was a Captain in Lord Essex's Regiment of Dragoons, which at the close of the year was sent to join Galway's composite army in Portugal. Hawley returned to England after the battle of Almanza, in the following April. It was no doubt while in the Peninsula that he first heard of the incident recorded in the following pages; but it was at a later date, as appears from internal evidence, that he took it down from the

lips of two of the actors. There is nothing to show in what especial way it interested him. The manuscript has come into the possession of Lieutenant-Colonel William Toovey Hawley, by whose courtesy the present writer is enabled to make use of it.

A few more words of introduction are desirable, to explain the military situation in the Peninsula in the year 1706. The long conflict between the Grand Alliance and Louis XIV., intermitted by the Peace of Ryswick, had been resumed in 1701, when to the questions already at issue was added that of the Spanish Succession. For in the same year, the direct line of the Austrian Princes of Spain having come to an end, the Duke of Anjou was crowned in Madrid. Spain became the instrument of France; and in due course the Austrian claimant, the Archduke Charles, landed in Portugal to attempt to regain the larger kingdom. In addition to the Portuguese army, a doubtful quantity, he had with him 6500 British troops and 2000 Dutch, the whole being under the command of the Duke of Schomberg, who had not inherited his father's talent. In the opening campaign the Franco-Spanish army under Berwick invaded Portugal and captured

some of the border fortresses. The second campaign was indecisive, although a little colour and glory was lent to its drab record by the miraculous exploits of Peterborough in Catalonia. The third campaign, which opened in March 1706, at first promised greater results. The Huguenot Ruvinny, Earl of Galway, who had superseded Schomberg, advanced in earnest into Spain with 19,000 men, including a British contingent made up of Harvey's Regiment of Horse and the 2nd, 9th, 17th, 33rd, and Brudenell's Regiments of Foot. This contingent, however, mustered only 2200 sabres and bayonets, although at that time there were 10,000 British troops scattered about the Peninsula.

The invasion began well. Berwick was forced back; Alcantara, Plasencia, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Salamanca were taken; and on June 27 the invaders entered Madrid. Here they remained for three weeks, while nothing was done. The

Portuguese troops were troublesome, and already the Spanish peasantry was threatening to rise. Partisan bands were attacking the lines of communication, intercepting convoys and driving in foraging parties: the populace of the capital was hostile; and on July 15 Galway marched out north-eastward to Alcala de Henares, in Guadalajara. Here he was joined by Peterborough, clamouring for action, and the Archduke. But now the peasantry was up in earnest; and Berwick, having at length assembled a superior force, took the offensive and appeared between the allied army and Madrid, which he reoccupied. Galway decided to withdraw from a dangerous situation. He lingered in Spain for another month, but his force seems to have been reduced to about 14,000 men; and with the coming of October, when all orthodox generals then went into winter quarters, the campaign came to a disappointing end.

II.

We can turn now to General Hawley's manuscript. It is headed as follows:—

both on that Command with Captⁿ. Ravenall."

"A Narative of a Retreat of a party of Horse, in the Year 1706 during the war in Spain, collected from two Men of the Regt. of Horse, then Harvey's, one of the Men now a Q^r.Master, the other a Gunner, who were

Harvey's Horse is still in the Army List as the 2nd Dragoon Guards. It was raised in 1685, its first Colonel being Henry, 2nd Earl of Peterborough. He was succeeded by Daniel Harvey, late Lieutenant-Colonel of the 2nd Troop (now 2nd Regiment) of

Life Guards. Harvey became a Lieutenant-General in 1707. The second in command of the regiment was Lieutenant-Colonel Roper.

As originally raised, Harvey's consisted of only four troops, each of 60 men. These troops were reduced afterward to 40 rank and file; but returned to their original strength, with the help of drafts from other regiments, when Harvey's left Ireland for Portugal in 1703. About this time, also, the number of troops was increased to seven or eight, and the regiment mustered 418 officers and men in 1705. It sailed for Portugal without horses, and at the end of March 1704, only 20 men per troop were mounted, the Portuguese horses being as a rule quite unsuitable. The dress of a trooper in the Spanish campaign consisted of a scarlet coat, a silver-laced hat, a pistol-proof cuirass and pot, and tall boots. The man carried pistols, sword, and carbine.

Daniel Ravenall (or Ravenel) began his career as a cornet in Macclesfield's Horse, a corps which was disbanded in 1712. In 1705 he exchanged into Harvey's as 2nd Lieutenant, joined his new regiment in Portugal, and there obtained another step in rank. He was promoted Captain a year after Almanza, and was killed in Lord Stanhope's action at Almenara in 1710. The whole of Harvey's Horse was captured with Stanhope at Brihuega, in the same year.

In continuing the narrative,

it should be noted that the dates in the text are Old Style.

"About the 10th of July, 1706, the Confederat Army under Lord Galloway was encamp't between Madrid and Alcala de Henares, when a party of 360 Horse was detached under the command of an Officer who was a Spaniard born, but had deserted and was then in the Portuguese Service (his name forgot) but by his Title of Commissario Generall guessed to be what we call a Brigadeer.

"This party formed three Squadrons. The next in command was Don Manuell de Alborez, a Portuguese, Major of Horse. The Captains and Subalterns were all Portuguese, except Lieut: Ravenall and one Q^rMaster Nashe, both of Harvey's Horse, the only Reg^t: of English Horse in the Army.

"The Squadron which was immediately under Lieut: Ravenall's command was composed of forty-two English, of Harvey's Horse, and twenty eight Dutch of Trimbern's Horse and Matta's Dragoons, 14 men of each, and the men of St. Juan's and Attalay's Horse, Portuguese. The other two squadrons were all Portuguese."

The duty of this detachment was to meet and bring into camp a convoy of clothing and other stores then due from Portugal. The route of the convoy lay through Salamanca and

Avila to the pass over the Guadarama Mountains called El Puerto de Guadarama, which is some thirty miles west of Madrid; and thence by way of the capital to the camp at Alcala. Accordingly the Commissario General and his 360 men made a leisurely three days' march across country to the eastern foot of the pass, near the Escorial. Here they bivouacked in the open for fourteen days, awaiting news of the convoy and passing the time in foraging expeditions and "excursions" to Toledo and other places, "where the Brigadier raised some small contributions in Money." Exactions of this kind would not help their popularity with the neighbouring peasantry: in any case, by this time the whole country must have been on the verge of revolt, and waiting only for the arrival of Berwick's army, which now was closing on Madrid. Although none of the officers seem to have realised the fact, the situation of our isolated detachment of horse was highly perilous. It dawdled happily enough in the bivouac by the Escorial until August 6th, when it was aroused by the news—whence arrived we are not told—that it was waiting in vain. The convoy had been captured near Salamanca by a notorious renegade Irishman named Plunket, whose exploits have a peculiar significance at the date of writing, when some of his name and possibly of his family have just been executed for another piece of treachery.

There was nothing left for the cavalry detachment but a speedy return to the camp at Alcala. It was proposed to march by way of Madrid; and that night was passed within sight and hearing of the capital, "under a parcell of Trees, not far from one of the Kings Houses, call'd La Casa del Campo." During the night the men were disturbed by a great noise and the firing of rockets in the city. One of the narrators, the Quartermaster, then a corporal, was out on patrol; and he learned from a peasant that King Philip (the late Duke of Anjou) had just entered Madrid with his guards. No doubt the army of Berwick was close at hand. A council of war was held beneath the "parcell of Trees," at which Ravenall proposed that they should cut their way through to Alcala along the road which ran to the north of the capital; but although it was discovered that this road was held by no more than a hundred horse, the General (as we will continue to call him) had other ideas. He was, in fact, in mortal fear of being captured and shot as a deserter, and he had decided to retreat forthwith to Portugal across the Guadarama Mountains. With this decision the Portuguese officers, naturally enough, concurred.

"About eleven at night," the narrative continues, "being the 7th of August, the Party had orders to Mount as quietly as possible: and strict orders for silence on the March; they

had then two days Bread and Corn, received that morning. They passed the Escuriall and el Puerto de Guadarama without any action, but descending the mountains, at a little Estallage or Inn near a village, some of the Portuguese wanting some Provisions discovered them all, by their Language, for soon after they heard the alarm Bells of several Villages.

"This was the third night's march from Madrid; early in the morning they came to a large village, called St Vincente. Here they halted, to try to gett some provisions.

"The Gen^l. sent an officer into the Place, to acquaint them, that they were a Party of Phillip's Troops, going to secure Salamanca from the Portuguese, and only desired to buy some refreshment; but this did not take, for a Priest answered him that they did not believe him, and that by the alarm in the Country he was sure they were Enemys, and they must expect no refreshments there.

"The Priest came out soon after to the Gen^l. and told him his only safety was to be gon immediately, for the whole country was in Arms. They stayed here in all near three hours, to rest the men and horses, but gott no refreshments: during this time they saw numbers of People, gathering from all the adjacent villages, with arms and weapons of several kinds.

"And about eleven o' clock, these Paizans began to fire upon the body, and killed and

wounded some Men and Horses; upon this there was orders to Mount, and as Lieut: Ravenall told the Corporal, the Gen^l's design was to endeavour to escape, without attacking or killing any of these Paizans.

"But they found themselves so surrounded by them that the Major, Don Manuell, and Lieut: Ravenall overruled this opinion of the Gen^l's, and made a disposition to Charge them, and so make their retreat through them.

"The Gen^l. was an old man; and seemed on this occasion to be in very great fear, and left the disposition entirely to the other two, whose intention was to distroy as many of the Enemy as they could, hoping thereby to intimidate the rest from pursuing them.

"There was an intervall, or space of ground, left unpossessed by the Paizans, but contrary to the road which led through the Village and which of necessity they were obliged to take. The Body being divided into four little squadrons, they fell in at once among the Enemy, giving no quarter, and at last they gained the road thro: the village. This Action lasted about an hour, before they were got clear of the Town. On drawing together toward the Evening, they found they had lost forty odd men, and by the account of some Paizans they took the next day, there was 400 of them kill^d. or wounded."

During the next two days the cavalry pushed on without

meeting any opposition, although it was plain that the peasantry was collecting together on all sides. But on the 13th, after a difficult night march to avoid a strongly held defile, there was a serious encounter.

"About ten in the morning, they entered a little Valley, the Sun exceeding hot and both men and horses very faint. Here they hoped to have rested a little, but as they supposed, the People who had guarded the pass all night, finding they had taken another Road, were now coming in pursuit of them, for they saw numbers pouring down upon them, and a good maney among 'm mounted.

"They were soon harrassed for above an hour, with popping shots from the Hills round them, and from behind Trees and Rocks. Now the Horses began to faile very fast, and severall Men took to their Feet, without Boots or Shoes, having none. Upon their beginning to move, the Paizans crowded into the little Plain in great numbers: this caused some consternation, both in the officers and men, which route to take, and y^e Corp^l. thinks it was observed by the Spaniards, who till then had kept in separate bodys, but now joined, in order as he thought to attack them in a body.

"At this time all Cloaks and Wallets were ordered to be thrown away, and but 200 Horses and them hardly able to carry their riders.

"Here about half the body of the Enemy, being nearer than the others (and being greedy of the Booty they thought themselves sure of) as reported by some of them who were taken, began the attack, and were sustained by the other Body, and then began a very furious, confused Battle, for none expected Quarter or Life if they fell into the Paizans' hands. The road was guessed to lead over a small Hill, thro: a low wood of nutt Trees; and thither they were to cutt their way. They then fell in among the great croude of Spaniards, with such a kind of fury as Dispair may be imagined to force Men to, cutting as every Man was able, on all sides. Those who first got clear thro: allways made the Front; and endeavour^d by short halts to gett up as many men as they could, or as Lieut: Ravenall thought consistent with the safety of the number who had got through. Those who were not able to join them were given over."

The fate of those poor wretches who were thus "given over" to the mercies of the peasantry may be imagined: it was never known.

"This lasted near two hours. There was no guessing certainly at the number of Paizans killed. He believes above two hundred. When they had passed over the Hill they saw before them a well inhabited country, full of Aldeas, or farm like houses,

the Country somewhat hilly, but no villages in view. The road they were then in led them very near one of these farm houses, about which there was a croude of People. The Gen^l: ordered a Portuguese Captⁿ. with some men to advance and disperse them; on their approach these Paizans retired into the House, and firing from the windows they kill^d. the Captⁿ. and three of the men: upon which the rest came back to the Body, who kept moving on, and were not further molested from that House, for the Spaniards were busy stripping the killed.

"It was then about five in the Evening. About half a league from this house another Party of Paizans had hid themselves in ambuscade, from whence they received a fire which killed a Portuguese Cornett and four men. This Evening the Men gott some Fruit in the hedges as they marched, which was some help to them, but they were always pursued by small Partys, who now and then knocked down a man or a Horse."

Before the evening was out the wearied detachment was again attacked. The Corporal who tells the story was given sixteen men as a rear-guard. Of these sixteen eight were on foot, and the horses of the other eight were utterly exhausted. As the Corporal admits, this command "Shock^d. him a good deal: because there had been often a rear guard, and he had observed that the

Gen^l. had never halted to bring them off: if they got up it was well; if not the Gen^l. never stayed for them." Moreover, the men on foot, who had clouts tied about their legs instead of boots, were without arms except a few guns and spades picked up from the peasants, their own having been lost or ruined in the retreat. It was plain that these poor fellows were to be sacrificed because they were the most useless of the party. They agreed, however, to sell their lives "as dear as possible," and the Corporal disposed them in some low shrubs through which the remainder of the detachment was then retiring. The Spaniards, some sixty in number, led by a priest in armour over his habit, were received by a fire which brought down the leader and five or six others, whereupon the rest turned and fled. "The Priest, as he fell, kept fast hold of the Horse's reins, and his feet hung in the Stirup. The Corp^l. made an end of the Priest and mounted his Horse. . . . Here they gott a Boracho of Wine, a Loafe of Bread, a good large piece of Bacon, and some ammunitiion which they soon divided, to their great joy and refreshment." In due time the gallant little rearguard rejoined the main body, who had never looked to see them again. The General offered the Corporal fifty twenty pistoles for the captured horse, "but upon the Corp^l. answering him, that

the Horse was then his Life, and who ever offered to take one must take the other first, the Gen^l. said no more." This incident throws some light on the character of the "General," as well as on the attitude of the English toward the Portuguese, and *vice versa*. We cannot doubt that the horse would have been seized without more ado but for the respect in which the small minority of Englishmen was held. Probably they would have been backed up by the Dutch in any quarrel. And indeed the crisis was too acute for quarrels: it was essential that the detachment, or what was left of it, should keep together; and the retreat continued under the usual conditions of sniping and its attendant casualties. The Brigadier's Aide-de-Camp was among those who fell at this time. At length, toward midnight, they were able to halt and rest for a few hours: "during which time the Gen^l. sent out a Cornett and fifteen men, but for what the Corp^l. never heard. This party never joined them again, nor they never knew what become of them."

And when day broke the General himself—"that Castilian dog," as Don Manuel called him—was gone also. He had slipped off in the night, and no one ever heard of him again. He was believed to have been killed.

The sniping had begun once more, and the weary and dishevelled band resumed the

retreat. Not one of them knew the country, but they believed themselves to be in Estremadura, and hoped before long to reach the town of Coria, where, apparently, they expected to find succour. But they were nowhere near Coria. They had been driven far to the north, and were on that morning (the 14th) within six or seven leagues of Salamanca.

"In about half a Leagues march Lieut: Ravenall's horse was shott dead: his Servant gave him his and run on foot. This day proved fatall to Q^rMaster Nash, of Harveys, who tho: a fatt heavy man, was mounted upon an English Guelding who had held out to admiration.

"The Q^rMaster, it seems, had tasted no sustenance but water for four days. He at once appeared to be quite mad, and soon fell off his Horse. A trooper of Harveys stayed to assist him. The Corp^l. saw the Paizans run in upon them, all striving who should murder them first, which they did both.

"This day there was nothing of any Bodys appeared only sculking Partys of ten or more, tho: the Country was well inhabited. A great part of the road was over Hills with little thicketts at small distances, which gave the Paizans opportunitys of picking up severall Men and Horses; especially those who were in the rear, being faint and not able to keep up Close.

"Those Men who happened to be best mounted, with Horses taken at several times from the Enemy, were very serviceable this day, for they killed a good many Paizans, who rode Horses or Mules, and gave them to the Officers and Men who wanted them most. They also gott Wallets, and some amunition and arms. This day the Corp^l. killed a Spaniard, who was well mounted, and gave the Horse to Lieut: Ravenall, whose own was very nearly failing quite.

"Notwithstanding, this was the easiest days march they had had from the begining, haveing had no general attack. They lost a good many of the faint and weak Men, picked off in the rear. They guesed this part of the country had not been so much Alarmed as to rise in large Bodys, for in the Evening they took several Paizans unarmed, who told them they came from Salamanca, which was five Leagues off. This was the first time they could form any judgment where about they were. Lieut: Ravenall treated the Paizans very kindly, and gave them money to fetch them some Provisions from the next village, but kept four of the lustiest for guides. They then marched on without staying the return of those who went for refreshments, in hopes that night and next mornings march would have carried them clear of Salamanca, but the next morning had like to have proved the most fatall of all. At about break of day they

mett some people on the Road unarmed, who informed them they had intelligence at Salamanca of this Body of their Enemy's being in the Country; but they were told they were so shattered and fatigued that they could not be able to come so farr, at least not so soon, and that there was there a Captⁿ. with a troop of brave Men, to whom was joined almost all the Cavalliers and Students, and many others of the City, and that they were resolved to take them all Prisoners if they came so far."

Breaking through this fog of pronouns, we find that the Captain in Salamanca was in fact the Irishman, Plunket. The fame he had won for his depredations along the Portuguese frontier had been increased greatly by his capture of the convoy; and he seems at this time to have held some irregular sort of command over the city. His only permanent force was a body of Irish and other renegades, numbering about a hundred. These men were well mounted and armed, and wore a hussar uniform. The rest of Plunket's following, as we have heard, was made up of students, peasants, and the rabble of Salamanca. The leader himself is described as "a tall, lusty handsome man, in a hussar-dress, with a white feather in his cap." It is clear than he expected little or no resistance from the lost and diminished detachment of horse that had wandered within

reach of his hand. And in fact, of the 360 men who had left the bivouac near Madrid a week before, no more than 180 remained. Twenty of these were on foot: the horses of the rest were scarce able to carry their riders: there were only two officers—Don Manuel and Ravenall; and the Portuguese, except those in Ravenall's own squadron, were so thoroughly demoralised that they were only kept together by their knowledge of the certain fate that awaited stragglers. Like sheep they had drifted along day after day, unarmed, panic-stricken and useless, leaving the fighting to their stouter-hearted countrymen and the handful of English and Dutch who marched together under the Lieutenant. Ravenall, indeed, seems to have possessed the qualities of a good leader of men. The narrators may be over partial to him; but his own Portuguese followed him well, and the account reads as if he was virtually in command of the whole after the Brigadier's defection. The Portuguese Major, however, if he deferred to his junior, took his full share of the fighting.

They were about three leagues south of Salamanca when they received this unwelcome news of Plunket. As they continued their march, they learned from captured peasants details of the enemy's movements. The Irishman and his heterogeneous crowd of warriors were astir early; and, being doubtless no less well informed than Raven-

all, pushed southward across the latter's path. The country was thickly wooded, with many olive groves, and the two parties almost fell upon each other unawares: indeed, it was only when the trumpets and voices of the Spaniards were heard that the Ravenall realised that the time had come, and made his hurried dispositions for the fight. At the same time Plunket became aware of his enemy's approach; but as yet neither could see the other for the trees. The time was about 9 o'clock in the morning.

Plunket sent forward a trumpeter with a flag of truce, to demand the surrender of the detachment, offering quarter and good usage. Ravenall and the Major, after a short consultation, put the position frankly before their men. They pointed out that Plunket was not likely to have the power, even if he really had the will, to keep his irregulars in hand; and, "considering the numbers they had killed, that when those Countrymen they had come through should come to know they had them in their power, they would assuredly massacre them all, but if they would stand one brush more, and endeavour to kill Plunkett, his men would naturally run away, and they might have a fair chance of making good the rest of the retreat. To this they added a particular description of Plunkett, which the Country People had given them in the Morning. This, when delivered by Lieutenant Ravenall to the little Squadron he was at the head of, they all

answered him, they would all follow him to the last drop of their blood. Don Manuell had a very different answer from the Portuguese, who were almost as unanimous for surrendering, upon which he, in a Passion, drew his sword and swore he would rather be killed than taken, and those who would fight might follow him. About thirty moved out and joined him, with whom he came immediately and joined Lieut: Ravenall's little Squadron, which with this reinforcement made eighty men, whereof eight were on foot."

The three squadrons had been drawn up in line, with the dismounted men in the intervals; but those who refused to fight now moved off to the left. The remaining eighty were extended in single rank among the olive-trees, which, being regularly planted, so lengthened the front that it outflanked Plunkett's, although the latter had a great superiority of force. His men were still invisible; but when, these dispositions having been completed, the flag of truce was dismissed and the Spaniards' trumpet presently heard sounding to horse, it was estimated that they were about four hundred paces distant.

"Lieut: Ravenall had given his squadron orders not to fire till the Enemy was within half Pistoll shott, and when he fired his own Pistoll, that was to be the signal to begin, which the men observed very well.

"Plunkett's troop was at-

tended with numbers of Vollunteers on their flanks, who fired severall scattering shotts and wounded three Men, before his Troop came near, for the Olive Trees hindered him pretty much in his march, being obliged to make severall stops to gett his Ranks in order.

"As Plunkett came up near them, with a good deal of aparent bravery, the Major ordered a Trumpett they had left to sound a Charge; but the poor Fellow's hand trembled so he could not. The Corp^l thinks that Plunkett's Horse's head was within eight paces of them, before Lieut: Ravenall gave the signal, by fireing his Pistoll. Imediately his front Rank poured in a volley together upon Plunkett's squadron. Plunkett and his Horse both dropped, and about twenty of his Men, and that instant the rest of his squadron, and all his vollunteers, broke and ran away, and never made the least shew of steping, or rallying, or oposing the Body any more. They saw them ride against the Trees and over numbers of their Vollunteers, who made a great outcry, calling upon all their Saints. As it was an uncoman sight it made all the men laugh. . . . Upon Plunkett's squadron runing away, Lieut: Ravenalls men gave a great huzza, which was quite new, for in all their former engagements they had always kept a profound Silance. Just at that time, the Corp^l heard great fireing

and noise upon their left, which, as he was afterwards informed, was by a great number of Paizans who had surrounded that Body of Portuguese who had separated from them in order to surrender, and were distroying them, for not a man of them was ever heard of after.

"The Corp^l thinks, that this Body of Portuguese, drawing off and employing such a number of the Paizans, who certainly designed to have attacked the whole in the rear, while Plunkett attacked them in the front, was a great article in the Escape of Ravenall's squadron, for they received no farther damage, and were not at all pursued.

"Upon Plunkett's squadron breaking, the Major and Lieut: Ravenall moved strait forward, only cutting down those who were in their way, both of them calling aloud in Spanish, to pursue the Enemy, but at the same time in a low voice, and by Signs, made the men keep close and follow them.

"In half an hour the squadron was gott clear of the ground and the olive Trees, and had left the Enemy behind, but found themselves obliged to pass very near the City of Salamanca, which made them apprehend another attack. But by some Paizans they mett, and treated kindly, they were told that there was nobody in Arms in the City, for all those who loved fighting had followed Gen^l. Plunkett, and the gates were all shut. And so they found it to be, for

they passed close by two little Convents, very near the walls of the Town, without any obstruction, and saw very few people. After they had passed the Town they made a little halt to bring up some Men who had some wounds and were in sight."

Their tribulations, in fact, were almost over. Another halt was made a little later, at a deserted village, where forage was found for the horses. Here "one of Harvey's Men, who had a wound some days before, had a vast quantity of Magotts taken out of the wound;" and the other wounded had their injuries roughly dressed. A roll was called, when it was found that sixty men were left of the original 360. Of the forty-two men of Harvey's Horse, only six had survived: of the twenty-eight Dutch there were left three of Matta's Dragoons. The remainder were Portuguese.

The following day this remnant arrived at Castle Rodrigo, which was held by the Portuguese. The wounded, who numbered twenty, were taken in, but the rest were forced to lie outside the walls for three days, after which the whole were sent on to Ciudad Rodrigo. Here Ravenall fell ill from want and exhaustion, and several men died. Our friend the Corporal, "being idle there," attached himself to a force which Don Manuel presently led against Salamanca to make some reprisals; and finding, on his return, that Ravenall was

recovered, he accompanied the latter to Lisbon, whence eventually they rejoined their regiment in Valencia.

So ends this little chronicle of suffering, cowardice, and heroism. The narrative is set down in a style so bald and matter-of-fact that it is difficult in reading it to appreciate what privations this handful of survivors had undergone. After they left the village of San Vincente, on the western slope of the Guadaramas, virtually no details of their route are given, because, presumably, none were known. For nearly a fortnight they were lost in a bitterly hostile country, where capture meant certain death, probably with the accompaniment of torture. There was little water and less food: the

clothing of the fugitives came to rags, their weapons were lost or broken, their horses were foundered or shot; and although the weather seems to have held fine, we are told that "the heats were very great," as they would be in the Peninsula in the height of summer. Finally, as the narrators point out in conclusion, "a large Map will shew what a little way in a direct Road they had to march from Madrid, and how strangely they must have been hunted about, to take up twelve days and nights, at the rate they marched, and continueally going."

Note.—All the peculiarities of spelling are taken from the text.

DOUGLAS G. BROWNE.

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

BORDER MANNERS.

I. A WARDEN RAID.

“‘And, by my faith,’ the gate-ward said,
‘I think ’twill prove a Warden Raid.’”

—*Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

THE little idiosyncrasies of the Trans - Frontier Pathan, which include rapine and murder, arson, cattle - lifting and sheep - stealing, are, and for many years have been, a constant source of worry, if not despair, to the Indian Government. It may be that in the course of three or four centuries a Pathan Sir Walter Scott will arise who will unearth a Zakha Khel Roderick Dhu, or a Waziri William of Deloraine, and who will surround the exploits of his compatriots with that halo of Romance which is now lacking. But, in the meantime, for the Frontier Officer, whose duties bring him into contact with the Waziri, the Afridi, or the Mohmand, there is little that is romantic in the official dossier of a Frontier raid with its somewhat sordid details of pillage and violence, its trail marked by the low of burning villages. The Sirkar's officials live too close to the actual stain of the spilt blood, the glowing ashes of the burnt stacks and ruined homes, to be able to conceive of "Multan" as anything but a turbulent scoundrel and a treacherous blood-stained robber, who richly

deserves hanging, and there is no gainsaying the justice of that point of view. And yet, if it has fallen to our lot to repress, as a nation we can hardly dare to cast a stone. There is scarcely an incident in the story of our Indian Frontier that has not its parallel in the annals of the "Debateable Land" which lay between England and Scotland in years gone by.

If the Pathan woman passes her new-born son through a hole in the wall, dedicating him as "clerk of St Nicolas" with the words "Ghal shah" (Be a thief), the once fashionable methods in vogue on either side the line between Berwick-on-Tweed and Carlisle are plainly illustrated by the saying "Elliot's and Armstrong's ride thieves all." It is a saying which, if old annals and family records be at all credible, might with truth have been applied to every family of note, or indeed no note, throughout the south of Scotland or the northern counties of England.

Sailgai—the Sperkai Waziri robber—who with five men, within quite recent times, defended for some hours Gumatti

Fort against the assault of close on six hundred rifles assisted by a section of mountain artillery, has, in the early sixteenth century, his prototype in Dand or Andrew Ker holding out in his peel of Fairnihirst throughout a long autumn day against the English under Lord Dacres. The story of Sarwar Khan, nicknamed "Chikhi," or "The Lifter," wanted by the Frontier police for sheep-stealing, paid assassin, and leader of a little band of proscribed out-throats, ending, as it did, in the headship of the Zaimukht clans, who can produce a fighting force of 3500 men, recalls that of the Outlaw Murray, as told in the "Sang," who, from ruling over his troop of five hundred broken men, became Sheriff of Etrick Forest. Sarwar Khan's lair, too, not far from Chinarak at the head of a gorge, which, situated in the hills above the Kurram valley, was easily defensible by half a dozen marksmen, reminds one forcibly of the descriptions given of the castle of Lochwood, seat of the chief of the Johnstones, and of the comment made by King James V., that he who built it must have been a knave in his heart. The blood feuds which force Zaman Khan, the Afridi, or Mira Khan, the Mohmand, to plough his fields his rifle slung across his back; which keep Mahomed Afzul of Sultan Khel, or Dadai, of the same village, each pent within his tower throughout the hours of daylight; which built the covered ways leading to the

highroad, where the truce of the Border runs and must be kept,—differ in no way from the feuds between Scotts and Kerrs, Johnstones and Maxwells. Indeed, for sheer treacherous dealing, it is hard even to equal on the Frontier the cold-blooded murder of Sir James Johnstoun of Dunsckellie by John, Lord Maxwell, as described in the Shawfield MSS. Perhaps the rescue of the Border freebooter, Kinmont Willie, out of Carlisle Castle by Buccleugh of Brankesome, has no exact counterpart; but even the sheer effrontery and dare-devilry which were the essence of success in that gallant act can scarcely surpass that required for the looting of, say, Peshawur city, which is one of the largest in Northern India. The city proper, exclusive of suburbs, is surrounded by a high wall, and entrance is only possible through two or three big gateways. Mostly the streets are narrow and tortuous, and a big force of police is always on duty there. The difficulty of carrying out a raid on a place of such magnitude will be at once apparent. When in addition it is remembered that within three miles is almost the biggest cantonment in the Punjab, with a garrison of one cavalry and five infantry regiments, to say nothing of artillery; that on every road there are guard-houses occupied by armed police, whilst the Khaibar Rifles hold all the main entrances into tribal territory; and that, lastly, all these units are linked up by

the telephone, and thus can be rapidly concentrated, it would seem sheer lunacy to attempt it. None the less, an armed foray was skilfully planned and successfully carried out by a gang of sixty Zakha Khel Afridis, who got away with booty valued at over a lakh of rupees.

Alike in what, I fear, must be termed crime, there is a resemblance too in their common possession of a keen sense of humour. In 1598 Sir Robert Carey, Warden of the West Marches, to obtain satisfaction for the plunder of the town of Haltwhistle in Cumberland by the Armstrongs, followed that clan across the Border, driving them into their refuge in Tarras Moss. There holding, as he thought, the exits, he determined to starve them into submission. The Armstrongs, however, contrived in spite of his guards to send a party into England, which harried the Warden's own estate, lifted a round dozen of his cattle, and returned in safety. Shortly afterwards they sent Sir Robert one of his own cows, with a message that, fearing he might fall short of provisions during his stay in Scotland, they had ventured to send him a present of English beef. Three hundred years later, a section of the Orakzais who had taken part in the attack on the Samana posts, sent in their jirgah and expressed their willingness to come to terms. Amongst others, one of the conditions imposed on the tribe was a heavy fine to be paid in hard cash. The Orakzais for-

warded a letter to the Political Officer, reminding him that before the unfortunate differences which had taken place they had always been on the best of terms with him. They therefore suggested that in memory of old times he might see his way to helping them with a subscription towards the payment of the fine levied!

In the early part of the reign of Henry VIII. a long list of outrages on the English side of the Border led to reprisals. Under the personal leadership of the Earl of Surrey, Warden of the Marches, the English Borderers, by way of a lesson, surprised and burnt the Border town of Jedburgh, with a loss of less than a dozen men, returning unmolested to England. *Mutatis mutandis*, Surrey's report to the King might serve to describe the provocation given by the Khwaja Khels, and the punishment meted out to them by the Commissioner of Pathanshahr.

Owing to a variety of causes—the chief, perhaps, being that of the Irishman who was “blue mouldy for want of a bating”—there was much trouble with the Khwaja Khels, who, with many allied Khels or clans, live just beyond our Administrative Border, though a small number occupy a few villages a short distance within it. The territory of the Trans-Frontier portion of the clans is known as Kohistan, and is a large tract of hilly country bordering on the north Ghilzaistan. It runs to extremes in climate, being very hot in

summer and very cold in winter, whilst it is mostly of a poor fertility. Treeless, barren, lacking in water—for few rivers run through it, and the inhabitants depend largely on artificial rain-water tanks to supply their needs—it possesses few attractions. Just outside its southern boundaries the scenery changes as if by magic—thanks to a network of irrigation canals drawn from the Surkhab and Shamil rivers, two big tributaries of the Indus. Leafy avenues border the roads, willows droop over the canals, and villages are embowered in fine trees. The land is a sea of smiling crops: high luscious sugar-cane, graceful maize, tall millet, wheat, cotton, and, in swampy patches, rice, alternate with each other; while wide stretches of verdant turf afford good grazing ground. Small wonder is it, then, if the Kohistani, gazing down from his poverty-stricken hills, is tempted at times to take toll from the prosperity spread out at his feet.

Great events had been taking place in the world. The Crescent had defeated the Cross in Macedonia, and a Pan-Islamic movement was on foot—rumours of which had spread into the Frontier hills. Despite the efforts of the Nawab of Ghilzaistan, and in defiance of his prohibition, several of the more turbulent of his subjects had crossed into Kohistan to assist the Khwaja Khels. In especial, a one-eyed Fakir of great reputed sanctity had left Amirabad, the Nawab's cap-

ital, with a following of five hundred men. This man, by name Saiyid Mir Bashir, was an uneducated, bigoted fanatic, but gifted with a fluent tongue and of great influence, as he laid claim to miraculous powers. Like many of his confrères, he promised, by virtue of his charms, to turn hostile bullets to water, whilst those of true believers should have a deadly effect on their foes. But where he outbid other miracle-mongers, was in that he claimed the power to bring the waters of a mountain torrent down in spate at his pleasure, though the bed might be bone-dry, by this means overwhelming his enemies; or he could reverse the miracle and dam a racing flood with a word, thus enabling his followers to cross dry-shod. Further, he asserted that he could bring rain at will, a really useful accomplishment in a country where water is scarce and the rainfall most exiguous and uncertain. These are but a tithe of the powers with which he was credited, and though it would seem almost impossible he should find any one to believe in him, there were not wanting witnesses who swore to having seen him perform the last two miracles, which perhaps accounted for the balance being taken on trust. Possibly a more potent aid to his influence on this occasion was the fact that he brought with him a useful contribution in the shape of three or four camel-loads of ammunition, and two small guns carried on camels.

Saiyid Mir Bashir made his appearance in Kohistan during the Ramazan, and at a big meeting held in the heart of the country his inflammatory preaching quickly set the passions of his audience ablaze. His rude but fiery eloquence naturally had the greatest effect on his younger hearers, and soon bore fruit. Two or three nights later, and Daudzai, a small village a few miles within our borders, was lighting the darkness with the red glare of its burning houses. It was but the beginning of a series of outrages. A few nights after it was the turn of Chappar, next of Murghaband, and in spite of every effort on the part of the local Militia and of the Border Police, the raiders invariably got safe away.

The Warden of the Marches—in other words the Commissioner of Pathanshahr, the Frontier district bordering on Kohistan—was Sir Joseph Baugh, a strong man, and in ordinary times of great influence with the Border tribes. He had been a soldier before entering the Political Department, as have been and are so many of our most successful administrators. Unwilling to make too much of what might be after all only a playful, though an annoying, ebullition of animal spirits on the part of a few hot-headed and uncontrollable youngsters, and since, though there had been much damage to property, there had hitherto been no loss of life, he summoned a jirgah of the Khwaja Khels

to meet him at Buland Kila. This was a small fort and village garrisoned by fifty rifles and twenty sabres found from Pathanshahr, which was only some fifteen miles away as the crow flies. The tribes had not quite made up their minds to openly flout the British Government, so about a dozen representative Maliks obeyed his summons. To them Sir Joseph issued his orders. Raids must cease; certain named ringleaders must be handed over to be dealt with by English law; and a fine of Rs. 5000 was to be paid within the next ten days. Otherwise Kohistan would be blockaded, and every Trans-Frontier Khwaja Khel found on our side of the Border would be placed in jail until the tribe made full submission. At the same time he advised them to insist on the return of Saiyid Mir Bashir to Ghilzaistan, lest through listening to his evil counsels worse should befall them. Requiring a prompt acquiescence to these terms within the week, Sir Joseph dismissed the Maliks to their homes, and himself returned to Pathanshahr.

Shalozai is an important village with about a couple of thousand inhabitants, chiefly Cis-Border Pathans, but mixed with a fair sprinkling of Sikhs and Hindus. It is situated on an arm of the Shamil river, and is perhaps ten miles from the border of Kohistan in a straight line, and about equidistant from Pathanshahr. It is protected by a high loop-holed wall, with a banquette

on the inner side, and is provided with bastions to give flanking defence. The Shamil washes the western wall, and is spanned by a boat-bridge, from which a metalled road leads to Pathanshahr through an avenue of fine trees. On the other three sides the ground is entirely open, though for some weeks in the autumn before the crops are cut these grow to within a few yards of the walls, merely a roadway, fifteen feet wide at the most, being left along the base. The walls themselves, though they look imposing from a distance, are rather crumbly in parts, and it would not require much time or effort to undermine them in selected spots. They are pierced on each face by high gateways wide enough to admit wheeled traffic. These gateways are curved outwards, and so form bastions in themselves, for the banquette is carried above the gates, which are made of stout planking reinforced with iron bars and studs, and are also loopholed. Generally speaking, the guardianship of a village of this description is entrusted to a dozen or so chowkidars, armed for the most part with old and nearly worn-out Snider carbines or single-barrelled shot-guns of equally antique pattern, whilst the chowkidars themselves are very often almost as antique as their weapons. Possibly some of the more important of the residents may have firearms of a later date, especially revolvers and automatic pistols; but the number of these

weapons is limited. The fact of the matter is, that the villagers rely on the British Government for protection, and are encouraged to do so; and while it may be said that their confidence is usually not misplaced, accidents sometimes do happen.

It was a night or two after the interview between the Commissioner and the Khwaja Khel jirgah, which had taken place towards the middle of August. The moon was in its last quarter, and the nights, though starlit, were very dark. Din Mahomed, chowkidar, yawned audibly as he gazed over the wall into the blackness. He had kept awake on his post for at least half an hour, and felt he had done all which could reasonably be expected of him; so having selected a soft spot in an angle of the wall, he went peacefully to sleep. Silence profound, broken only by the distant barking of a dog or the melancholy howl of a jackal, brooded over Shalozai and the surrounding country. Only, had there been anyone to watch, it would seem there is a curious agitation in the tall crop of millet growing close up to the north wall of the village. Not the faintest breeze is stirring, for it is one of those breathless nights that are the terror of a Punjab hot weather. The movement in the millet has ceased, but some half a dozen shadowy forms have flitted ghost-wise across the road, and a careful listener might hear the sound of iron scraping on mud at a point where a fall of

material has left a wide cavity, some six to nine inches deep, near the foot of the wall. Half an hour passes and the depth of the cavity is perceptibly increased, as has also the size. Suddenly on the inside of the wall a prowling village dog on the search for garbage pauses a moment with one forefoot raised, and then gives tongue with a sharp yapping yelp, which instantly elicits response from half a dozen curs near by. Din Mahomed wakes with a sleepy curse, and rising to his feet breaks off a lump of mud from the parapet to throw at the brute which has disturbed his slumbers. It is his last act, for a shot rings out from the edge of the millet, and throwing up his arms he falls from the banquette into the street beneath. As he falls the point of a pickaxe is driven through the wall, and the hole is rapidly but no longer silently enlarged. The need for silence has gone by. Several more men rush out from the crops and eagerly assist in the work; but the earthen wall, though in bad repair, is still tough, and some minutes must elapse before the hole is large enough to admit of their entrance. Inside the village meanwhile the noise is indescribable. The shrill cries of women and children, mixed with the hoarser shouts of men, the barking of dogs, and the tramp of hurried feet, create a deafening medley of sounds; whilst, added to these, the chowkidars are running hither and thither and firing at random over the walls at anything or nothing, as a

mark presents itself to their excited fancy. All is disorder, and no one knows where to go or what has happened.

At last one of the chowkidars, rushing aimlessly through the street, stumbles over the body of his slain companion. He thinks his last hour has come, and announces the fact at the top of his voice, but none the less shouts lustily for assistance, and his frenzied cries reach the ears of two men, Khan Amaldin and Shah Mard Khan, who have kept their heads. They are Khans, uncle and nephew, of good family from Mallozai, a neighbouring village, and happen to be armed with Mauser pistols. They dash towards the shrieking chowkidar, and, realising the situation at a glance, immediately make their way to the banquette. Taking the greatest care not to expose themselves above the parapet, they creep into an adjoining bastion. Here, cautiously reconnoitring from a loophole, they make out a black mass at the foot of the wall perhaps fifty yards away, and on this they open fire with their pistols. Loud cries, mixed with a string of hearty curses, tell them that some at least of their shots have taken effect; but they have little time for observation, for a shower of bullets bury themselves in the wall around their loopholes, or sing through the air above their heads. Now, too, the clamour in the street redoubles, for the raiders have completed the breach

and are pouring into the village. An angry glare begins to throw its baleful light upon the scene, showing that some of the houses have been fired, and the two Khans begin to find the bastion where they are crouching is becoming unpleasantly lighted up. The elder, Amaldin, who had, as it happened, served in one of our cavalry regiments, and knew the value of a timely retreat, growls to his nephew that they must be off if they wish to save their lives. So keeping in the shadow the two thread their way along the wall, and up into a side street, hoping to organise some sort of defence in another part of the village. By this time the houses in the northern quarter are well alight, and to the other noises are added the roar of the flames and the crash of falling beams, as roofs collapse, throwing up lurid columns of red sparks and long streaming tongues of orange flame. The raiding party increase the din, as they beat in the doors and shutters of the houses they are pillaging, and break open the padlocked chests of the fat bunniahs, whose money-bags are their principal objective. The delay caused by this search for plunder enables Shah Mard Khan and his uncle to reach a big house facing down the main street, along which the robbers are making their way. This house, which belonged to the headman of the village, Malik Usman Khusrogi, was one of the few masonry buildings in the place, and pos-

sessed a battlemented roof. It stood in a street which crossed the main road like the stroke of a capital "T," and was a bit higher than its neighbours.

Malik Usman Khusrogi was an old man, who had lost much of the energy which had characterised him in days gone by, and was now somewhat decrepit. Still he had lost none of his courage, and had no intention of submitting tamely to be robbed, or of allowing his women-folk to be maltreated. He welcomed Amaldin and his nephew gladly, handing over to the elder Khan the direction of the defence, which was hastily organised with the assistance of half a dozen men the pair had collected on their way. After strongly barricading the entrance, the party mounted to the roof, and, crouching behind the parapet, they reserved their fire till a group of the raiders were collected within fairly easy pistol range, and were lit up by the blazing houses which marked their track. Then on a given signal their weapons rang out, taking the robbers completely by surprise, as beyond the few shots fired from the banquette there had been practically no opposition. The raiders reeled, and obeying their first impulse retired a few steps, and attempted to take cover and reply to the fire. Their leader, however, quickly recognising the fact that the garrison of the house were too well protected to suffer from his return fire, and feeling that his men had about as much plunder as they

could conveniently carry, if their withdrawal were not to be seriously impeded, gave the signal to retire. The retreat was covered by a dozen men, who kept up a hot fusilade on the keep, for such the house had proved itself to be. At length a shrill whistle sounded from the direction of the northern wall, and the rearguard decamped rapidly and simultaneously, being lost in the crops outside the village before the Khans could make their way out of the house and organise a pursuit.

The raiders had carried off most of their wounded with them, but two of the rearguard were found who, badly hit, had fallen exhausted near the breach, and had been unobserved by their companions in their hasty flight. Some of the villagers, angered by their losses and ruined homes, to say nothing of rough handling, were for giving them short shrift, and wished to despatch them out of hand. The Khans, however, withstood them, not, I fear, from any instincts of mercy, but because they hoped to extract information from them which might prove useful to the Commissioner, and because they knew their fate, though delayed, was surely sealed. The prisoners were secured, none too tenderly, and carried into a lower room in the keep, where they were recognised as Khwaja Khels, thus leaving no doubt, if any had previously existed, as to the perpetrators of the raid. In spite of promises and also of certain delicate methods of

inquiry well known in the East, which correspond only too well with the "Question" as known in the British Isles three hundred years ago, they maintained an obstinate silence, refusing to answer anything asked of them. After many vain efforts to obtain the names of their confederates, or at least of their leader, or a clue as to the direction from which the band had come, Khan Amaldin ordered them to be placed in an inner room of which he kept the key, and posted a guard over the only door before retiring to snatch a short rest.

Slowly the glare of the burning houses faded out of the sky, and the clamour and lamentations of the villagers died away, though at intervals through the silence of the night rose shrill cries of mourning. These were wrung from bereaved widows and mothers, for about fifteen or twenty men had been killed or wounded by the raiders. A pallid crescent came up out of the east, its wan beams lighting up the still smoking ruins and the havoc wrought by the robbers, and disclosing in places black ominous patches where the life-blood of some unfortunate had ebbed away. Here and there the silent-footed, shadowy forms of the village dogs flitted in and out amongst the ruins. Now one would pause to sniff at the stains in the roadway, or again would gingerly sidle up to some still stretched-out form that had not yet been picked up and stand poised above it,

ready to dart aside at the slightest movement or to snarl defiance at any of his kind that approached to dispute his horrid banquet. After a while the wailing keen of the mourners ceased, and the peaceful light of the moonbeams shining down on the stillness which had fallen over the village formed a curious contrast to the lurid baleful glare and the clamant riot that had marked the earlier part of the night.

Messengers were sent into Pathanshahr soon after dawn broke to convey information of the raid, and the villagers spread over the surrounding country trying to pick up the trail of the robbers, or to recover any plunder that might have been dropped by them in their flight. For a time the trail was easy to follow, as whilst the majority of the band were pillaging the village a portion had looted the cattle byres and had driven off a couple of hundred head of cows and buffaloes. The tracks led straight towards the hills, but after following them up for a short distance the villagers abandoned the task, which they had known from the first was hopeless, for the Khwaja Khels had had too long a start. If, however, they could not recover their cattle, they did not return entirely empty-handed, for they came upon a wounded man hidden in a field, whom they brought in and confined with their other prisoners. A few hours later orders reached the village that these prisoners were not to be

sent into Pathanshahr, as the Commissioner himself was coming out to Shalozai, and would personally conduct an inquiry into the occurrence on the spot.

About midday, preceded by an escort of mounted Border Police, Sir Joseph arrived. He was met at the boat-bridge by a deputation of the village elders, headed by old Usman Khusrogi, who was accompanied by the two Mallozai Khans. Having inspected the ruined portion of the village, and heard the story of the assault and the defence, the Commissioner walked over to the Malik's house, and the three prisoners were produced before him. The proceedings are short. Evidence having been given as to the circumstances under which they had been captured, they are asked if they wish to say anything. Two of the men preserve a sullen silence, merely scowling fiercely at their captors and their judge. The third, however, who is the one who was caught in the fields outside the village, makes a long, rambling, plausible statement to the effect that he is a poor man and had been journeying quietly on his business to visit his brother in a village called Talai some two miles away. He had fallen in with the raiders in their retreat from Shalozai, and they had incontinently shot him lest he should put the pursuit on their track. Here a police inspector whispers a few words in the ear of the Superintendent of Police, who had accompanied Sir Joseph.

The Superintendent steps forward and mentions that the man is Gul Baz, a Khwaja Khel and a noted bad character, who can be identified by half a dozen of his sowars if necessary. Sir Joseph remarks drily that evidence as to character is quite superfluous. He then turns to the prisoner and tells him that he is obviously unfortunate, but that it is his own fault for having timed his visit so badly, and that he will have to pay the penalty for keeping such late hours. Having said this, he orders the three men to be taken out and hung on a big tree close to the spot where the raiders had broken their way through the village wall. The sentence is at once put into execution, Gul Baz protesting his innocence up to the moment that the rope is round his neck. As the noose tightens his demeanour changes, and he launches a bitter curse at the Commissioner, who listens impassive and unmoved. Justice having been done, Sir Joseph shakes hands with the Mallozai Khans, and congratulates them both on their cool and gallant behaviour. Having added a few similar words to Usman Khusrogi and the village elders upon the successful defence, he returns to Pathanshahr and issues the necessary orders for a strict blockade of the Kohistan country, and for the immediate arrest of any Trans-Frontier Khwaja Khel caught on our side of the Border. The net result of these orders is that within the next few

days two or three score of the tribesmen are rounded up and receive free lodging in jail.

Shortly after the above events, information was brought in to the authorities, through the medium of the Mallozai Khans, that the Khwaja Khel raiders had spent the day before their attack on Shalozai at two big villages, Jalandar and Jani Kot, which lie just inside our Administrative Border, and that some at least of the villagers had actually taken part in the outrage. Both these villages were entirely occupied by Khwaja Khels or their blood relations, and though within the Border line, can scarcely be said to be governed by us. Perhaps by a stretch of imagination their inhabitants, being within our sphere of influence, might be described as slightly biassed by our Political Agent. The Commissioner now decided that the two villages should be razed to the ground and the inhabitants expelled from our territory. This was to serve as a warning of the indiscretion and inadvisability of sheltering or assisting Border hotheads when engaged in pastimes of the kind described.

Three squadrons of cavalry with a battery of field artillery were given secret and urgent instructions to be ready to move at midnight, the whole in Field Service Order, and a hundred rifles of the Militia together with a hundred men of the Border Police got orders to march directly it was dusk, and, moving with the utmost secrecy, to rendezvous at a point

a couple of miles south of Jalandar at 3 A.M., where they would receive further orders. Sir Joseph informed the cavalry commander confidentially of his intention of accompanying the troops, and insisted on the need for absolute secrecy. Punctually at midnight the column started, and every care having been taken to avoid the jingling of chains or the rattling of scabbards, there was no sound save the rumble of the gun wheels. Even this was muffled and faint, as the column kept to the side of the road, which was carpeted with a thick layer of dust. Mile after mile flitted by, and shortly before three o'clock the rendezvous was reached, the infantry (*viz.*, the Militia and Police) having arrived a short while before.

The Commissioner now gave orders for the infantry to occupy certain points on the foothills on the north side of the doomed villages, both so as to prevent any assistance coming down from Kohistan, and also to intercept any fugitives, as he wished to arrest participants in the raid on Shalozai. The infantry were to be in position by half-past four. The guns were ordered to come into action so as to be in readiness to shell the villages if required, but more with a view of overawing the inhabitants and impressing on them the futility of resistance. As soon as it was light the cavalry were to draw a cordon round the villages, whilst thirty of the police, retained for the purpose, were to move in and arrest the men wanted. Any

man resisting was to be shot down, as also were fugitives attempting to escape across the Border.

The force got into position without any hitch or mishap, and as soon as it was light and the cavalry had taken up their places, the police entered the villages to secure their men. There was an angry buzz as from an overturned hive of bees, but when the inhabitants realised the preparations made for their undoing, and especially the hard fact of the guns in action and trained on their homes, they submitted with sullen resignation. One man drew a knife, but before he could use it he was lying with a bullet through his brain, and the example sufficed. Men, women, and children were collected in a field between the two villages, where the Political Agent read out to them the orders of the Commissioner. Preparations were now made to loot and burn the villages systematically. Between four and five hundred head of cattle and sheep were collected and sent off to Pathanshahr under a cavalry guard, and then a couple of squadrons were dismounted and told off to enter the houses, and to collect anything of value to be loaded on to the village carts. Two hours were allotted for this, and the men thoroughly enjoyed the work. Stalwart Sikh and Mahomedan troopers were to be seen rushing about, tripping over their spurs and colliding with each other, as they hunted squawking and frightened fowls in and out through the houses and streets.

Household utensils, jezails, knives, cooking pots, and tulwars were collected and piled in a jumbled mass on the carts. Hidden stores of grain, money, and even rough jewellery, such as silver anklets and bangles, were unearthed and similarly treated, while articles too bulky or valueless to be carried away, such as ploughs or harrows, were piled into a heap for burning. At the end of the two hours the houses had been completely gutted of their contents, and kerosene oil was now poured over the roofs, and over all inflammable articles. At the same time armfuls of straw and dried chaff were also piled up to assist the flames in catching readily. In the meantime three or four solidly built towers had been prepared for demolition by an Engineer officer who had accompanied the column, and all being in readiness, the fuses were fired. The towers seemed to rise bodily into the air, there was a loud explosion, and they settled down again shapeless masses of stones and dust. These having been satisfactorily disposed of, a light was set to the bhoosa-stacks in the surrounding fields, and soon they were blazing merrily. Men now went into the villages from the leeward side, and fired each house as they came through. A fairly strong wind was blowing, and it was obvious that, given half an hour, there would be no saving any portion of either place.

As the flames roared up to the heavens, and a canopy of

smoke obscured the sun, a few dropping shots were heard coming from the foothills where the covering-party of Militia and Police were posted. Sir Joseph had no desire for the troops to be drawn into an engagement, so issued orders for the covering-party to fall back on the cavalry, a squadron having taken up a position in rear of the infantry to help them in case of trouble. The Khwaja Khels, who all this time had been kept under guard to watch the destruction of their homes, were now despatched, escorted by a squadron, towards the Frontier, to go where they pleased beyond our borders. By the time this squadron returned the infantry were well clear of the foothills, so the column re-formed. The prisoners, to the number of five-and-twenty, were handed over to the charge of the police, and, leaving a detachment to form a rearguard, the force started on its return march. The men were in high spirits, and more than one of the sowars had a chicken or two hanging from his saddle-bow, or a brass pot, or some other small article that had taken his fancy; so the squadrons presented a somewhat unusual appearance for our Indian cavalry. By order of the Commissioner, a large number of ekhas and tum-tums had been impressed in the Pathanshahr bazaar as soon as it was daylight, and sent out to meet the column to save the infantry the weary march back, and with them came a small body of mounted police to take over the prison-

ers. The operations had been carried out entirely successfully and without a casualty on our side, whilst the punishment inflicted had been exemplary, as it was calculated that the financial loss to the Khwaja Khels exceeded Rs.10,000.

II. ORDEAL BY BATTLE.

“But War’s the Borderer’s Game.”

—*Marmion*.

The lesson inflicted upon the Khwaja Khels proved a direct discouragement so far as small pin-pricking raids were concerned, but the tribes were by no means done with yet. Perhaps the events of the next few weeks have no exact historical parallel in the annals of the “Debateable Land,” though its list of battles is a long one, and in that respect is at one with the history of the North-West Frontier. However that may be, the Warden of our Indian Marches had cause enough for disquiet. Saiyid Mir Bashir was still working upon the passions of his co-religionists in Kohistan with his sermons, which had become more inflammatory than ever, and several of the other clans had been induced to throw in their lot with the Khwaja Khels, till practically all sections of the country had enlisted under the Fakir’s banner. At length it was decided that the Id, the big feast which marks the conclusion of the long Ramazan fast, should be celebrated by a blow struck for Islam in an attack on British India. The immediate objective was to be the fort and village of Buland Kila. Fortunately the British authorities, by means of their secret agents,

had been able to keep their fingers on the pulse of the movement, and were fully aware of the growing unrest, and of its aggravation by the Fakir, a fact which the Commissioner had clearly indicated in his warning to the Khwaja Khel Maliks. The resolution adopted in this instance was known by Sir Joseph within a few hours, with the result that further dealings with Kohistan passed into the hands of the military authorities. A careful calculation showed that it would not be possible for the tribesmen to assemble within striking distance of Buland Kila in under a week, but nevertheless the bugles rang out the “Alarm,” and in less than six hours from the receipt of the news, the Movable Column, always held in readiness for such emergencies, was marching out of cantonments. It consisted of two squadrons of cavalry, a section of field artillery, a mountain battery, a company of sappers and miners, and a brigade of infantry, in all rather under 3500 men.

The column had orders to entrench a camp at Janakhwar, which commands two of the main passes leading out of Kohistan, and is roughly three

miles from Buland Kila. It was not intended to enter Kohistan, but merely to prevent the tribesmen from trespassing within our borders. The force, having bivouacked for a few hours on the road, reached its destination soon after noon on the following day, and a perimeter camp was formed, and, to break up a rush, an apron of barbed wire placed around it rather under a hundred yards from the crest line of the parapet. To the north of the camp the ground was open, though covered with a low scrub, right up to the hills a mile and a half or more away. On the west, at a distance of about a thousand yards, there was a big village called Kikarai, nominally friendly, from which a fairly wide canal with very soft muddy bottom ran towards the hills, and turned off westwards along their base. Just at the bend was the small village of Kazhakai, surrounded by high crops which also extended for miles along the western bank of the canal. There were, too, high crops within a couple of hundred yards of the south-west corner of the camp, which for safety had to be cleared for some distance back. At the south-east corner there was a graveyard rather less than five hundred yards distant, whilst along the east face ran a nullah mostly dry, which led down from the Kohistan foothills where it had its source.

For a day or two all was quiet, and the leisure was employed by the troops in strengthening the defences of

the camp, placing obstacles and fougasses, trip-wires connecting with flares, &c. The chief component of these flares is a test tube of very thin glass filled with an acid, round which straw or chaff is heaped. The wire connecting with the tube is looped and slipped over the end, in such a way that a very slight pressure is sufficient to break the glass and release the acid, which coming in contact with a special material, bursts into a bright flame. The first night after the flares had been set, the force had turned in dead tired after a long day's work, when a brilliant light suddenly shone up on the north side of the camp. The inlying picquets at once stood to arms, and shortly afterwards there was a crackle of musketry from the perimeter, which turned out the remainder of the men. The firing lasted a very short time, and as there were no further developments the troops were dismissed. Visions of spies, or a band of Ghazis creeping up to surprise the camp under cover of the darkness, but foiled by our vigilance, were before everybody's eyes. Next morning, the carcass of a village dog with a bullet through its body disclosed the nature of the nocturnal visitor.

Whilst the infantry looked after the defences of the camp, the cavalry reconnoitred morning and evening into the Kohistan foothills. The authorities hoped that the Kohistanis, seeing we were prepared, would decide not to try conclusions with us; but as daily reports were brought

in, giving news of fresh accessions to their strength, another infantry brigade was brought out to Buland Kila, which entrenched itself on the glacis of the fort, whilst a weak cavalry brigade was ordered out to a central position in rear of the infantry. Soon after the arrival of these reinforcements the cavalry patrols were fired on, but as only one sowar was wounded practically no damage was done, and the next morning the cavalry had their revenge. One of their scouts brought in news to the officer commanding the machine-gun section that a group of the enemy numbering about a hundred was in a nullah visible from a small ridge about half a mile in front. As far as could be seen they had put no sentries out, and were quite unconscious of the proximity of our cavalry, being in fact engaged in preparing breakfast. The machine-guns were cautiously brought up to the ridge, the gun detachments taking every precaution against showing themselves. The range-finders gave the range as fourteen hundred yards, after checking it with the utmost care, and the guns were very deliberately trained on the unsuspecting foe. The British officer commanding the section made sure of the sighting of each gun, and then, focussing his field-glasses on his target, gave the signal. It might have been a bombshell bursting among the cooking pots. For a few seconds the Kohistanis were too taken aback to move, but in less than half a minute there was

not a sign of them save for half a dozen or more bodies which lay beside the fire. They would never move again. The cavalry returned to camp, each man wearing the satisfied smile of the famous tiger.

This little incident seemed to have irritated the enemy, as that evening about eight o'clock the darkness of the night was lit up by a series of flashes around the camp, and the rattle of musketry, accompanied by the whiz and thud of bullets, roused the brigade to arms. For a time the firing was quite heavy, especially from the graveyard to the south of the camp, where a strong body of the enemy had ensconced themselves in the shelter afforded by the graves. Their bullets missing the south parapet caused a good deal of annoyance to the men lining the north face of the camp, and gave them reason to congratulate themselves on the fact that they had that day completed a parados the full length of that side. Away in the distance a bugle could be heard sounding what was evidently meant for the "Charge." There was a lot of loud shouting, some of it abuse of the British troops and the rest obviously intended to rouse the courage of the tribesmen to sticking-point for an assault. It was all to no purpose though, for they could not harden their hearts sufficiently to face the cold steel they knew was awaiting them in the darkness, close behind the shadowy black line which was all that indicated the entrenchment, and after half an hour or so the noise died away and silence reigned

again. An episode which created some amusement was one which occurred in the midst of the heaviest fire. A driver of the transport corps, awakened by the shots, sprang from his blankets, and seizing a waterproof sheet wrapped it round his head and shoulders, and fled towards the mule lines. No one could quite make out his object in thus enshrouding himself, but apparently he thought that what would protect him against celestial rain would be equally efficacious against earthly bullets, and perhaps he had had dealings with some magician in the same line of business as Saiyid Mir Bashir. Except to one or two mules and a cavalry horse, no damage had been done inside the camp, although the enemy repeated this little treat a couple of times more the same night for our benefit. On the other hand, the next morning two or three blood trails just beyond the barbed wire showed that our assailants had not escaped scathless from our return fire.

News was now coming in daily that big contingents of the enemy were converging on Isham, a village in the hills near the head of the nullah forming the eastern boundary of the camp, whilst along the crest of the foothills facing our northern parapet numerous figures could be seen busily engaged in building sangars. They were not molested, as the British authorities were now quite as anxious for a fight as the Kohistanis. They wanted the latter to collect, that the lesson might be the

more severe and far-reaching, since it was obvious that the tribes were bent on trouble. During the firing on the previous night the hill-tops of Kohistan had been blazing with signal fires. From every range in sight the red flames had pierced the darkness, each betokening a contingent on the march, so that it was probable there would be no long delay before matters came to a head. Still the day passed quietly, except that the cavalry patrols were again shot at. About 10 P.M. there was a repetition of the previous night's entertainment, though from a more respectful distance; and on this occasion the troops scarcely bothered to reply, as it was considered a waste of ammunition. There was one exception to this. In the middle of the earlier performance a light had been noticed in Kikarai village, flashing and disappearing in a way which was suspiciously like signalling, and a half company had been told off specially to watch the village, with sights carefully adjusted. The light appeared, and immediately there was the crash of a volley, followed closely by a couple more, after which signalling was apparently an unpopular amusement.

The next evening orders were issued that the brigade, leaving a couple of hundred men to guard the camp, was to be in readiness to move out at 8 A.M. the following morning to seize and occupy the foothills, whilst the brigade from Buland Kila would co-operate. Four squadrons of

cavalry were to watch the left flank, the remainder the approaches to Buland Kila from the north, and the artillery were to be massed in a central position to cover the advance. The troops welcomed these orders with the keenest delight, as camp life, with the thermometer at 120° in the shade, had already begun to pall, and a brush with the enemy would be a pleasing diversion. Rumour in the camp had it that the Kohistanis had assembled between fifteen and twenty thousand men, but this was probably a good deal exaggerated. Still there seemed every prospect of quite a good fight.

It was a hot cloudless morning as the regiments moved out of camp and formed up on their brigade markers. Facing were the low foothills known to them as the Pebble Ridge, culminating in a sharp pyramid-shaped hill named The Peak, overlooking the big nullah which ran past the camp. Behind rose the hills of Kohistan, barren, black, and forbidding. The Pebble Ridge was formed by a series of long, bare, stony mounds perhaps a hundred feet high, and to all appearances absolutely devoid of life. In one or two places scarcely perceptible black lines marked the position of the enemy's sangars; but there was not a sign, not the flutter of a rag, to show they were occupied, though the troops knew well that keen eyes were watching their every movement. The Janakhwar brigade had orders to occupy

The Peak and the Pebble Ridge with three battalions, of which the right battalion was to be astride the nullah in order to link up with the troops advancing from Buland Kila, the fourth battalion being in reserve. The Brigadier rode up and received the reports, issued one or two last instructions, and the regiments, shaking themselves out into battle formation as they went, moved off.

Still for a few moments there was no sign from the low stony ridge which was the British objective; but before half the distance had been covered little spurts of dust sprang up among the advancing files. The plain, thick with dust after a long drought, looked as though big drops from a heavy thunder-shower were slowly falling on its surface, but an ominous "whit, whit!" in the air betrayed that something more dangerous than rain was astir. As the first shots ricocheted through the lines with a vicious whirl, two or three tribal standards were suddenly reared on the crest of the Pebble Ridge and on The Peak. The fire grew heavier, but the range was long and no damage was done. Grimly silent the troops pressed on without a check. Suddenly from behind there rose a complaining shriek which tore through the air far overhead, and shortly after a thick black column started into being on the Pebble Ridge. The guns had begun to talk. Soon the air was wailing continuously as if in pain, and dark earth-spouts

sprang up from the mounds in front till it seemed that the crest and near slopes of the Ridge had burst forth into geysers. High up, too, white fleecy clouds appeared looking harmless enough but for the red flash that was their birth-pang, and which told that they were belching forth a deadly hail of shrapnel bullets. A sharp continuous staccato bark like the rattle of a stick along a paling, only ten times as fast and loud, revealed that a machine-gun had come into action, and the trail of its bullets was shown by the little grey puff-balls that rose without cessation on and around a big sangar which crowned one of the mounds.

Meanwhile the regiment astride of the nullah was meeting with fairly serious opposition. Directly in its line of advance on the right of the ravine was a big graveyard, the headstones of which offered convenient ranging marks to the enemy. As the companies threaded their way between the graves, they came under a heavy converging fire from sangars on both sides of the ravine, at ranges varying between five and eight hundred yards, and men began to fall rapidly. In spite of this they pressed on towards a low ridge in their immediate front, but were temporarily checked on the far side of the graveyard, beyond which the ground rose gently in a glacis-like slope, absolutely devoid of cover. The check was but momentary, as on the right the pressure of the Buland Kila brigade was

beginning to make itself felt on the enemy's flank, threatening to cut their line of retreat to the hills—a threat which no Eastern race, save only the Japanese, can contemplate with equanimity. On the left of the nullah a bright flash of steel at the foot of the Pebble Ridge showed that the regiments on that side had fixed bayonets, and shortly dancing points of light were flickering towards the crest. The pace quickened, as Englishman, Sikh, and Pathan vied with each other in their efforts to be first to get to handgrips with the enemy.

Before that steady advance, however, the standards, which had been flaunting defiance in the breeze, were hastily lowered, and disappeared into folds of the ground. The Kohistanis melted away into the hills in rear literally, for, except for a stray figure or two, no one saw them go. Nor was their retirement by any means a rout, for they retreated with a sting in their tails, keeping up a hot fire from hidden points of vantage. They were skillfully carrying out the usual Pathan tactics of retiring before an attack, hoping to lure their foes into difficult ground in the hills, and looking forward to getting their turn in harrying the rearguard, or, as in this case, in following up the retirement on camp. The British General was, however, an old Frontier officer, accustomed to Pathans and well versed in their ways, and had no intention of being drawn a step farther than he wished.

Having gained the Pebble Ridge, which was separated from the higher hills in rear by a deep ravine, he halted his force, while he allowed his guns to play on and search the slopes across the valley, much to the disgust of the Kohistanis, who did not consider this was at all playing the game.

They had been particularly anxious to draw the British into the nullah beyond Pebble Ridge, as they had made arrangements for a cunning diversion. A large body of men was concealed partly in the crops on the western bank of the canal close to Kazhakai, and partly in a big depression from which a narrow gully led down from the hills near the spot where the canal bent off to the west. This force, estimated at three or four thousand, was under the command of a noted Malik—Daria Khan by name—who had accompanied Saiyid Mir Bashir from Ghilzaistan. The plan was that, as soon as the troops had been lured beyond the foothills, Malik Daria Khan was to sweep down on the camp with his men, plunder and burn it, and then, turning towards the hills again, take the brigade in rear. As the British refused to be drawn, this plan miscarried; but the camp proved a tempting bait. Malik Daria Khan either thought that there might be time to destroy it, calculating the force would be pinned to its ground by the tribesmen in its front, or, what is more likely, some of his men got out of hand,

and a body of about a thousand issued from the depression.

On this flank four squadrons of cavalry had been standing dismounted by their horses, concealed under a spur of the hill, and chafing at their inaction. A sharp order, and the men sprang to their saddles. Two squadrons were held back in reserve, but the remaining two wheeled into line at the trot and advanced into the plain. As they debouched the trumpets shrilled out some musical heart-stirring notes, maddening the horses, who well understood the meaning of that wild music, and the squadrons burst upon the eyes of the astonished tribesmen in the thrilling, glorious gallop of the charge. It is the one moment for which all cavalry soldiers live, when, as the glittering lance-points drop before the horses' chests, they sweep like a whirlwind down on the foe. Forward rushed the long line; the going was good, and there was nothing to stay them. Before their lance-points the Kohistanis were fleeing in a frenzied rush for safety. The squadrons were pressing on at top speed, and the inevitable disorder had broken up the line. Soon it was obvious that the charge had resolved itself into a race for the canal. Unfortunately the cavalry had miscalculated the distance, for the tribesmen reached the canal first and flung themselves across it, whilst the lancers found themselves hung up by an obstacle which proved too much for the majority of the horses. Some

of the men, better mounted, were shot down from the edge of the crops as they put their horses at the jump, others as they tried to make their way through the water. Those few who did succeed in crossing found themselves in evil case, and had the greatest difficulty in eventually getting back, as the Kazhakai villagers had flooded the fields, and the troopers floundered in a sort of sticky morass, the mud being above the horses' fetlocks. Seeing the troops in trouble, another large body of the tribesmen poured out of the gully and set themselves to the congenial task of killing and cutting up the wounded. This was the opportunity of the two reserve squadrons, who, held back as they were, had sat watching with pent-up excitement and fury seething in their breasts. They were now unleashed, and whirled down at the gallop. The attention of the Kohistanis was so occupied by their blood-thirsty work that the troopers got well into the enemy before they were perceived, and amply avenged their fallen comrades. Many of the tribesmen were actually so absorbed in their ghoulish task that they never even heard the thunder of the charge till the lance-points were almost within their bodies. In one instance at least one of these brutes was seated on his victim, who was still alive, and was engaged in hacking off the poor wretch's fingers one by one when a lance took the cruel fiend in the back and he never even knew what had struck

him. A battery of horse artillery, which had accompanied the cavalry, now opened with shrapnel on Kazhakai and the surrounding fields, and the enemy retired into the hills. After collecting the dead and wounded the cavalry withdrew out of range, but remained in the neighbourhood to discourage any further attempts on the camp.

All this while the infantry had lain out on the Pebble Ridge under a burning sun, the prevalent feeling being one of absolute boredom, as the enemy steadfastly declined to show himself. To the discomfort of the heat was added the fact that the ground was extremely hard and stony, and was covered with prickly seeds. These bore a strong resemblance to miniature crow's feet, those four-spiked obstacles which our engineering manuals tells us are so useful when placed in the bottom of a ford. For the benefit of the uninitiated I may mention that the spikes are about three inches long, and so arranged that however one of these instruments of torture is thrown down, a spike always points upwards, and is calculated to pierce and lame an unwary foot.

At half-past one orders were received by helio that the force would commence its retirement at two o'clock, and regimental reserves immediately took up a second line in prearranged covering positions, at the same time sending water and ammunition-mules to the rear clear of the foothills. Troops retiring before a Pathan

enemy have no use for encumbrances. At two o'clock the first units of the advanced line began to fall back in small parties, the men taking the greatest care not to expose themselves, wriggling down flat on their stomachs till well below the crest-line, and then rising and getting away at top speed. The men to go were selected by name from all over the line, lest gaps should be left, and those who remained increased the rate of their fire, so that it would seem the position was still strongly held. This was in order to deceive the enemy, and to prevent his suspecting that the retirement had begun.

Whilst this was going on a mountain battery, which had advanced on to the Peak directly it had been secured by the infantry, began to man-handle its guns down the slope of the hill. The gunners were only too thankful to get away, as the slopes of The Peak were steep, and had given them a deal of labour and trouble. Every time a gun had been fired it had recoiled some yards down the hill, in spite of the check afforded by drag-ropes, and had turned bodily over. It had to be turned right side up, and hauled up the slope again by the gun detachment, entailing exertion which, whilst it might have been pleasant enough on a cold day, was extremely distasteful under a burning sun, beating down relentlessly and radiating from the stony hill. By the time the battery had dismantled

their guns and loaded them on the waiting mules, the enemy had perceived that the force was in retreat, and the nearer slopes of the Kohistan hills were alive with men. They came streaming across the intervening valley in thousands, as a crowd breaks into a football field when the referee blows the "No Side" whistle. Standards danced down the rocky spurs, and the companies covering the retirement soon had their hands full. The Kohistanis paid most attention to the troops west of the big nullah, as they hoped, by making use of the cover it afforded, they would be able to cut into the flank of the battalion there. These hopes were doomed to disappointment, as four machine-guns had been placed in position 1500 yards back, to checkmate this very movement. As the leading tribesmen showed themselves in the nullah and on the eastern slope of The Peak, they came under a cross fire which drove them back into cover.

Several hundreds were now advancing up the northern slopes of the Pebble Ridge, but they too were stopped by the steady fire of the rear-guard, although they got to within a hundred yards of the position held. All this time the men were being sent down with orders to take up another covering position to assist the retirement of the second line. Soon only a few scattered groups of men, specially selected for their activity and because they were good shots, were left out on the advanced

line. These waited till their comrades were well clear, keeping up a smart fire on anybody they saw, and then, selecting their opportunity, raced away down the hill. At the same moment the second line opened rapid fire on the abandoned position, the guns also spraying it with shrapnel, to deny it to the enemy. The withdrawal of the second line was carried out in a similar manner, and the force was half a mile away in the plain, and free from all chance of entanglement, long before the tribesmen could establish themselves on Pebble Ridge.

The British casualties, all told, inclusive of the cavalry, were under three hundred; whilst from information which reached Pathanshahr through several separate and corroboratory channels, the Kohistanis lost more than treble that number in killed and wounded, including several influential Maliks, with nothing to show for it. In one instance, it is true, they scored off us. Before abandoning The Peak, the top of the hill had been mined, the fuse leading to the mine being taken back with the retiring troops and unwound as they went along. A sapper officer was in charge, who waited till the enemy began to swarm on to the hill, and when a large number had collected there lit the fuse. Unfortunately this proved defective, probably owing to its length, which was several hundred yards, and the mine failed to explode. The tribesmen discovered the fuse, and following it up located the mine. This they leisurely dug

up, removing the gunpowder with which it was charged, and carrying it off with them, afterwards sending in a grateful message of thanks for so opportune a gift. Still a thousand casualties was a fairly heavy price for 50 lb. of gunpowder, so that even the officer who had laid the mine, disgusted as he was that his little surprise had failed to come off, scarcely begrudged them their booty.

As a result of this fight the assembly of the Kohistanis melted away like snow under a hot sun. This was, no doubt, chiefly due to the Pathan custom of carrying off the dead for burial and the wounded to be cared for in their own villages, a custom which causes great difficulties in estimating casualties. It may be, too, they had had as much punishment as they cared for at the time, but, whatever the cause, they disappeared. The next morning the cavalry were all over Pebble Ridge, and even crossed the ravine and reconnoitred as far as the village of Isham, which they found deserted, without being in any way molested or seeing a soul. Even yet, however, the tribes refused to submit to our terms, so the blockade of the country was strictly enforced. Saiyid Mir Bashir remained in Kohistan, and did his utmost to work on the fanatical feelings of the tribesmen, and to stir them up to another trial of strength. In this he was successful, for a month later they again came down to Isham in large numbers, or rather to the spot where the village had been, for

two or three days after the fight the Janakhiwar brigade had gone out one morning and blown the place up, without encountering any opposition. Still they encamped at the ruins, as it was the only spot where water was obtainable for miles. Once again cavalry patrols were fired upon and the camp sniped into at night. In a day or two, when their numbers had grown, the tribesmen became bolder, and even ventured down into the plain during daylight, and attempted to follow up the infantry picquets, which always remained out from dawn till dusk about half a mile beyond the perimeter. On one afternoon they crept down into the big graveyard near the ravine, and fired into a company of infantry who were exercising in that direction, till it became obvious they would not be contented without another lesson.

The operations followed practically the same course as before, except that on this occasion the British artillery was even a good deal more in evidence, as two or three batteries were brought right up on to the Pebble Ridge, and the guns really did most of the work until the retirement began. This time the enemy tried following up the Buland Kila brigade, but with no more success—in fact, they came in for some rather rough handling—and the following morning, as before, not a Kohistani was in the vicinity. The enemy's losses were said to be, if anything, heavier than in the previous en-

gagement, whilst those of the British were under a hundred.

The result of this last encounter rather sickened the tribesmen, and even the Fakir's most impassioned eloquence was impotent to collect them again. Indeed that firebrand found it convenient to retire to Ghilzaistan, as all sections in Kohistan, even the most anti-British, were beginning to look askance at him. His conjuring trick with the bullets had failed to come off, and though his reputation for sanctity, which really rested on as insecure a basis as his reputed miraculous powers, still protected him, he got a notion that absence of body was a more certain safeguard. He therefore announced that he was going to visit the shrine of a very sacred Pir which lay in the heart of a distant valley, but actually slipped away quietly in the direction of Amirabad. His reception there was likely to have been warm, for the Nawabs of Ghilzaistan have a short way with disobedient subjects, and Saiyid Mir Bashir could not plead even a success which might have justified his defiance of his ruler's orders. Fortunately for him, when he was still some distance from the capital, a friendly hint reached him of the state of the Nawab's temper and the probable nature of his welcome. He therefore turned aside and sought an asylum in a difficult part of the Badakshan country, where the Nawab's authority was more nominal than real.

His departure had removed the chief obstacle in the way of an understanding with the Kohistanis, whose jirgahs were shortly afterwards given a safe conduct to Pathanshahr to interview the Commissioner, for the soldiers had done their part, and the management of affairs reverted to the civil authorities. The tribes were ordered to pay a heavy fine, to surrender a large number of rifles, and to give up the ringleaders of the Shalozai and other raids to be tried by us. The alternative was the continuation of the blockade, and the imprisonment of their compatriots who had been arrested in British territory. Three or four influential Maliks were required to surrender themselves as hostages, and the blockade, of course, would be unrelaxed till these terms had been entirely complied with, whilst our troops would remain out in readiness on the borders of their country. It was further hinted that in the event of too prolonged a delay in acceding to these conditions, the troops might enter the country and remain in occupation of the principal villages till still harsher conditions had been enforced. The jirgahs endeavoured to obtain some mitigation of these terms; but Sir Joseph was adamant, and permitted no discussion. It was a case of "Take it or leave it," and the Maliks unwillingly gave their assent. The hostages were selected from the members of the jirgahs, and the remainder with-

drew sorrowfully to Kohistan to collect the fine and the arms. Even after this for some days the tribesmen, who are nothing if not democratic, and are by no means ruled, but merely, at the most, influenced by their Maliks, were inclined to shilly-shally. They wanted to send in another jirgah, but the Commissioner refused to receive it, and the stringency of the blockade, which had now been in force for nearly six weeks already, had begun to make itself felt. Such poor trade as they had with British India was entirely cut off, and even such a necessity of life as salt was growing scarce, and almost unobtainable. The clans could see no way out of the impasse except in submission to the orders of the Commissioner. Then, too, the heaviest losses in the fighting had fallen on the fiercer and more intractable members of the community, and the more cautious and moderate spirits now had a chance of making their voices heard. Consequently the irreconcilables were overruled, and a month later {the money and the rifles were handed over at the fort at Pathanshahr, and three notorious bad characters, who had long been wanted by the police, were surrendered and safely lodged in the jail, to await the due reward of their misdeeds. Hostages and prisoners were released, the troops returned to cantonments, and Peace once more temporarily settled down over that portion of the Border.

E. F. KNOX.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

VISCOUNT BRYCE AND GERMAN ATROCITIES—HIS EXCUSES FOR THE ENEMY—THE INFAMOUS POLICY OF “KISS AND BE FRIENDS”—A DURABLE PEACE—“MAN-POWER”—SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON’S EXHORTATION—THE FOLLY OF THE TRIBUNALS—IRELAND AND COMPULSION—MR REDMOND’S HYPOCRISY—THE FRIENDSHIP OF IRELAND.

A YEAR ago Viscount Bryce set his name to the report of the vilest outrages yet chronicled in history. None knows better than he the horrible enormities committed at Aerschot and Dinant, at Termonde and Louvain. The crimes of which Germany was guilty cannot be palliated. They were the expression of a national sentiment and a national discipline. They were systematically prepared and universally approved. It is idle to concentrate the blame of them upon the Kaiser or upon the General Staff. The whole people must share the guilt as it would have shared the profit, had the policy of ruthlessness been found to pay. Nor can the friends of Germany excuse her on the ground that her wickedness and cruelty are the new-born children of arrogance and prosperity. What Germany is to-day she has ever been—unspeakably coarse and unspeakably brutal. The outrages upon women and children, the wholesale murder of non-combatants, the illegal seizure of hostages, the arson and pillage, which marked her advance through Belgium and France, are merely the common practices of her armies. She

has defiled her hands with no misdeeds during the last two years which are not familiar to all who have studied her earlier campaigns. The German is unchanged and unchanging. He is still, as he has ever been, the wild beast of Europe. He embodies in his thick and portly form the very spirit of evil. The brute who, when he is charged with dropping poisoned sweetmeats upon an enemy’s line, defends himself on the ground that the sweetmeats contained not poison but explosives, is clearly deficient in humour as he is deficient in decency. Whether he will be chastened even by defeat is doubtful. He suffers from a monstrous kind of atavism, and it is probably true that “the only good German is a dead German.”

For many years, in our casual indifference, we have misunderstood the qualities and characters of foreign nations. We have gladly accepted that magnificent everything that seemed strange to us. Above all, we have been blind to what the Germans are fond of calling their “psychology.” We have read the works of Goethe and the fairy tales, and have solemnly believed that Germany was all blonde pig-tails

and *schwärmerei*. Even when the Germans overwhelmed Belgium with fire and sword, when they burned innocent men and women alive, and wreaked their drunken vengeance upon churches and libraries, we were half-disposed not to believe in the rumours which reached our ears. The ineffable Mr Ramsay Macdonald, for instance, protested loud, for the purpose of politics, against "the use which has been made of the stories of atrocities by the enemy." He deems this use "in the highest degree reprehensible." He believes that "real proofs" are unattainable. The poor victims of German brutality, shattered as they are in their nerves, cannot be trusted as instances of the truth. For them "a horrible death becomes an atrocity." Why, indeed, should it not? And in what circumstances is "a horrible death" not an atrocity? Perhaps Mr R. Macdonald, this callous-hearted sentimentalist, will explain. He admits that the Germans have been guilty of "atrocities and brutalities." He declares, which is not true, that "such excesses have always been associated with war." And then, to show his own moral superiority, he cries aloud that "it is detestable and diabolical to make use of such stories in order to excite hatred among the people," that "such action"—the using of the stories, which are true, not the committing of the crimes—"deserves the disapproval of every upright man and every honest woman."

There is nothing which Mr

Macdonald can do or say which need surprise us. When a man is so bitterly opposed to his own country that he can condone the brutalities which he admits have been committed by his country's foes, when he can draw a distinction between a "horrible death" and an "atrocity," he is not worth taking seriously. He may fairly be left to his own constituents and to his friends, the Germans, who still quote his winged words with interested respect. But it is time to protest, with what vigour we may, when Lord Bryce, the Chairman of the Committee which inquired into the outrages committed by the Germans in Belgium, gives proof of the same flabbiness as makes Mr Macdonald ridiculous. Nor can Lord Bryce attempt to escape from an absurd position by pleading ignorance. As we have said, he knew the truth more intimately than others, and yet he too urges us to "avoid and repress the spirit of hatred." He, too, finds excuses for the cold-blooded assassins of Europe. "The German people," he says, "are under a harsh and tyrannous rule, which has not only deceived and misled them but silenced any protest—and there are those who wish to protest—against its crimes. Some day—it is to be hoped—they will overthrow it when they learn the truth."

That day is not yet, nor is it ever likely to come. Meanwhile we can only wonder at the flaccidity of mind which pretends that hatred is a pas-

sion, which must always be repressed. If we do not hate wanton cruelty and superfluous brutality, then we make ourselves their accomplices. Moral indignation is more clearly necessary for the wellbeing of the world than an easy spirit of forgiveness. Lord Bryce urges us to consult "reason rather than passion," and he does not see that in this matter reason and passion are fighting upon the same side. If our passion—the unreasoning instinct of morality that is within us—urges us henceforth to look upon the Germans as objects of hatred, the voice of reason, which whispers in our ear, counsels us sternly and quietly to exclude the Germans from our commerce and our society.

For many years we have tried the policy of forbearance. Germans were permitted to come and go among us as they would. For half a century they had crept into our offices and workshops to steal the secrets of our trade and to underbid free-born Englishmen in the wage market. Lord Bryce tells us that "to indulge revenge would be to sow the seeds of future wars." We would remind Lord Bryce that the seeds of the present war were sown in the fertile soil of free trade and international amity. Had our markets not been open to the dumped goods of Germany, had not German banks enjoyed special privileges in the city of London, had not German clerks been allowed the freedom of spies in English offices, there would have been no war at all. The

military expansion of Germany has gone hand in hand with her industrial expansion. When in 1914 Germany seemed to come within measurable distance of dominating Europe, she owed as much to the factories of aniline dyes as she owed to the workshops of Essen. Her adventure was the outcome of England's commercial friendship and complacent indifference. That is what we gained by closing our eyes to the German character, by resolving at all costs to live on terms of friendship with our neighbours. It is to this condition of things that Lord Bryce would have us return immediately, and if we followed his advice we should surely aid and abet Germany in her preparations for a new war.

When Lord Bryce says that "our main purpose would have failed if we did not secure a durable peace," we agree with him. But after a long experience of Germany's "peaceful penetration" we are convinced that the only way of attaining to a durable peace is to exclude Germany from the comity of nations. As you do not take a burglar or a murderer into your house as a familiar friend, so you cannot admit to your concourse a nation which has torn up treaties and has stamped all the restraints of international law under foot. Where there is no trust there can be no friendship, and since the Allies will henceforth look with suspicion at Germany's signature upon a scrap of paper, we shall be wisely in-

spired if we indulge our revenge until all the Germans now living are dead, and until their descendants stand before Europe in white and penitentiary sheets.

The common mind is what Walter Bagehot called the mind of inexperience, the mind which learns nothing and remembers nothing, which is incapable at once of wholesome hate or of moral indignation. That Lord Bryce's mind should be incapable of experience is not surprising. He has never yet learned the necessity, in official positions, of supporting the claims of the British Empire. Some years ago he afforded us the unique spectacle of a British Ambassador who, with the approval of his Government, conspired against a British dominion. There is no darker episode in the dark history of Mr Asquith than the deliberate attempt which he and his Government made upon the independence of Canada. Had Lord Bryce carried out his instructions, then Canada would have been lost to us. The chains of commercial union, which he was ordered to forge, would have bound Canada, politically and morally, to the United States. And he was ready to face this disaster, as he is now ready to face a swiftly-cemented friendship with Germany, because he is wholly indifferent to facts. Even when he has collected the facts himself, he does not allow them to weigh heavily with him. His judgment is controlled completely by

maxims and phrases. He knows perfectly well that the Germans, severally and collectively, have shown themselves monsters of brutality in the war. And he cares not, for he remembers the copy-book headings of his youth—"to prolong hatreds increases suspicions," "avoid the spirit of hatred," and the rest; and straightway he dismisses the crimes of the Germans as the result of a harsh and tyrannous rule. Canada was preserved from his interference by her own honour, her own exertions. And England will be saved from becoming once more the friend and accomplice of Germany by a just feeling of anger and hatred which, in spite of Lord Bryce, still lives in our hearts.

It is, then, a sentimental prejudice which urges Lord Bryce to counsel a base submission. Others there are whom pedantry would persuade to kiss the Germans and be friends with them. Sir John Simon, for instance, is so hardened a free-trader, that he would not check for a moment the dumping of German goods in English markets. What does it matter that the dumped goods are foully stained with blood? They are cheap, and that is enough to satisfy the fervent champions of the creed preached in Manchester. No check, we are told, must be put upon the stream of commerce. Commodities must be allowed to flow freely, that the working man may enjoy

to the full the priceless boons of cheap food and low wages. So the pedant, caring not who makes the shoddy goods which he would have us use, nor what harm is done to those who eat the food which foreign and hostile hands have prepared, clamours that we should instantly be bound to Germany in the bonds of commercial unity. Before the war he would not disturb the equal progress of free imports, because he thought that Germany would not like it. Now that the war has come upon us, in spite (or rather on account) of free imports, he would willingly go back to those happy days when "Made in Germany" was a legend visible in every home, and an eloquent proof of our dependence and of our enemies' supremacy.

After the pedants come the greedy middlemen, who have the best reason for making it up with Germany. All their hopes live in a full pocket, and they can fill their pocket most easily by carrying the goods which Germany makes to market, and by taking a comfortable commission on their sale. To get the better of these men looks as though it might prove a difficult task. The unseen hand, of which we have heard so much during the war, still works for them and their German masters. Again and again has our Government promised to suppress the German firms which carry on business in England, and again and again their promise has proved illu-

sory. We hear of interned Germans enlarged for the day that they may attend to their businesses. We hear of alien firms hastily transferred to Englishmen, who have but a nominal share in the enterprise, and who are ready to keep it going until after the war. If it is our Government's policy to remove obstacles from the path of Germans while we are still fighting, what are we to expect when peace is signed? The interned aliens, who are now treated with the utmost consideration, will be free to go about their business of peaceful penetration as before. Lord Bryce and Sir John Simon will observe with infinite satisfaction that hatred is buried in as deep a grave as that which Lord Haldane selected for conscription, and the Germans will instantly set about getting ready for the next war with English money and English encouragement.

And yet, despite the mischievous activities of sentimentalists and pedants, despite the greed of those who regard a commission as a holy thing, we still have confidence in the English people. If only we bind ourselves by a solemn pledge never to buy anything that has been through German hands, never to have dealings with a German, we may yet preserve our honour stainless. It will not be easy, for the Germans are as cunning as they are unscrupulous, and neutral countries will be the glad transmitters of German goods. But though the Paris

Conference is forgotten to-day, its proposals remain on record, and they can not be brushed aside by the mere whim of a Minister. So that we are still of good hope that Lord Bryce's advice will not be followed, and that in due course the war of trade will follow the war of arms. For there, and there alone, lie safety and the assurance of peace.

But first of all the war must be brought to a triumphant close, and this cannot be done unless our supply of "man power" is adequate. It is not guns that make an army, it is men, and if we fall short of them, all the industry, all the ingenuity displayed at home, will be displayed in vain. In this necessity, as in others, the Government has failed us. Mr Asquith, with all the cleverness of a politician, has invented a form of compulsion, which has the peculiar merit of not compelling. There is only one way of enlisting soldiers; there are five-and-fifty ways of evading enlistment. The Coalition Government, as usual, asked us to be content with a compromise. It gave us the shadow of national service, and tribunals innumerable. Instead of sending all men of military age into the ranks, and then combing out from the army all those that were wanted for the making of munitions and for other necessary employments, they reversed the process. They permitted the bulk of our young men to take refuge in starved pursuits, and rendered it wellnigh impossible to dig

them out. Mr Lloyd George has confessed his sin, after his wont. He makes but a half-hearted effort to atone for it. "When you compare the exemptions here," says he, "with the exemptions in France and Italy, where they run to hundreds of thousands in these countries, they run to millions in this country." And Sir William Robertson, the one man whom the nation trusts, says plainly and openly that we want men.

Sir William Robertson, indeed, has already taken the place in the public esteem which once was held by Lord Kitchener. He speaks, as did his great predecessor, with the plain directness of a soldier, and his opinions carry the greater weight, because they are not expressed every day and every hour. He does not talk, like the politicians, for the sake of talking, or because he wants to keep himself within the public eye. He speaks because he has that to say which he alone can say with the full weight of a soldier's authority. In a speech, delivered in a gallant Lincolnshire village, he paid a high tribute to what we have achieved in the past. He reminded his hearers that when we went to war we had just six divisions. "Fortunately they were very good indeed. No better divisions ever left the shores of any country." By all the rules of war they should have been thoroughly beaten in a few days. "They were not beaten, they never have been beaten, they are not beaten now."

To-day they are fighting, and winning too, by the side of the unnumbered divisions which were "brought into being solely and entirely through the energy and foresight of that great soldier, Lord Kitchener, who has done as much as any man to win this war for the Empire." Thus in a full spirit of hopefulness Sir William Robertson looks to the future. "There is no sham confidence at the front," he says. "There are no shams at the front, and when men at the front are confident it shows that our situation is good." But the war is not yet won, and it will not be won unless we use to the uttermost every ounce of strength that is in the Empire. "We have adopted the principle of national service in theory," says Sir William Robertson. "We must see to it that we put that principle into practice. . . . We want men, more men. We want them now, and in due course we shall want all men who can be spared."

There we have the honest view of the soldier, who is not content with the passage of a Bill through the Houses of Parliament. He demands that the principle of National Service shall be put into practice. The politicians, on the other hand, seem to be satisfied so long as the principle is accepted in theory. They have set their law upon the statute-book, and there for them the matter ends. A rigid insistence upon the letter of the law might be unpopular in the constituencies.

Thousands of voters find it exceedingly pleasant to serve their country, at a vastly increased salary, in a corner where there is no danger, and they will all be useful some day at the polling booth. Then the susceptibilities of a Government which has never kept its own pledges must be scrupulously respected. When some months ago it was suggested that Mr Lloyd George's brisk young valuers, who earn a very modest percentage of their cost, should be asked to join the Army, the suggestion was greeted as though it had been a piece of impropriety with a hushed murmur of dissent. It was party politics, said the Radicals, which it was not, and the suggestion was dropped perforce lest Mr Lloyd George's delicacy should suffer a shock. And how shall we describe the base frivolity of the tribunals which have been set up all over England? Their proceedings would be comical did they not stand between us and victory. The ingenuity wherewith they furnish excuses to the idle and timid would be invaluable in the pursuit of politics. With ultimate enthusiasm the members of the tribunals serve each other's turn. One farmer gets off the son of another, knowing that presently he may rely upon the good offices of his friend. When it comes to the pinch, there is no trade, no occupation, which does not seem indispensable to these enemies of the army. No wonder that millions are permitted to escape

through the Government's net. We hear of a rat-catcher whose work is pronounced to be of national importance, and who is granted total exemption. We should have thought that there was another kind of rat better worth catching than these which annoy the County Council of Haddington. And as in one district the only enemies they recognise are rats, in another they fear only the attacks of rabbits, and deem the men "indispensable" who destroy them. We might almost believe that these good people did not know that we were at war with Germany, had not the last two years afforded us a sorry revelation of indifference.

But by far the worst offenders are the Government offices. These secure retreats harbour a vast army of young and active Englishmen, and the Government resents any attempt to dig them out. The work which they do, even were it indispensable, could quite easily be done by women. Nevertheless the influence of routine is too strong to be resisted. Civil servants innumerable have been writing minutes and making *présis* for many a long day. The Radical Government made heroic efforts to increase their number, and before the war began we were becoming, under the auspices of Messrs Asquith and George, that most despicable of all things, a nation of bureaucrats. We are letting a great part of our manhood drift, through competitive examination, to a safe inactivity. We

are fostering a race of men content to lay aside energy and ambition, to hope for nothing save an annual and automatic rise in salary, to find happiness in the assurance that to-morrow's dinner will not fail them. And now when our need is greatest the bureaucrats take refuge in their warrens, and it will need more than the skill of a rabbit-catcher to discover them.

The problem which faces us, then, is, or should be, obvious to all. It is also easily soluble, if goodwill and honesty are brought to the solution. But no favouritism must be shown; there must be no inclination to find a way out for the coward or the malingerer. The tribunals must be strengthened. The Government offices must be rigorously combed out, and it must be explained that it is not a good thing of itself to shrink from military service. A few weeks ago there was a strike on a certain railway, because three porters, convicted of stealing, were dismissed the service of the company. The colleagues of the thieves pointed out that if their friends were dismissed, they would become liable to military service, and so they struck. This episode reveals, in some workers at least, a strange state of mind. The men who went on strike—as a matter of fact they refused to work, and did not refuse to accept their wages—saw no evil in the thief. That their colleagues had taken what did not belong to them mattered not a jot.

But they saw three free-born and dishonest Britons threatened with enlistment, and they made the best protest they might against this infamous possibility. So deeply have the shams and hollowness of politics sunk into the breasts of Englishmen!

However, in Great Britain the way is clear. Compulsion is the law of the land, and if the present Government dare not take what soldiers the country needs, we must find another Government which will. In Ireland the way is hopelessly tangled by the briars of politics. On the one hand, we are told to approach the Irish with the utmost diffidence and respect. Our best plan, it is said, is to speak only of the great gallantry of the Irish troops, and to pretend that the effort which Ireland has made to win the war has been "splendid." On the other, we, the English, are assailed by Irish "patriots" with all the insults which injustice and unreason can suggest, and we are adjured not to complain, because the most important task that lies ahead of us is the conciliation of Ireland. We believe that worse advice was never given. What Ireland suffers from to-day, what she has always suffered from, is a parsimony of truth. England has treated her always as a spoiled child. If she does her duty, she receives such a meed of extravagant praise as is never in any circumstances given to England. If she refuses to do her duty, as she refuses to-day, she is flattered

and humoured into the belief that she exceeds all the other nations of the earth in wisdom and valour. What wonder is it, then, that she deems herself always affronted, and hugs a grievance which no policy can ever take away?

The facts are simple enough. Ireland, to her great detriment, has been excludcd from the law of compulsion, and since she has ceased to send any more volunteers to the army of the United Kingdom, her regiments cannot be kept at their full strength, and must be filled with drafts from England or be allowed to disappear. The weakness of Parliament in fearing to compel her to do her duty is matched by her own disinclination. And then into the midst of things comes that eminent "patriot," Mr Redmond, with a violent attack upon the British Government, and the promise, if he can contrive it, of an Irish session. His position, no doubt, is a little difficult. He is in the position of a leader without a party in his own land, and if he does not force the note, he runs the risk of forgetfulness. If he were forgotten it would be the proper reward for his own misdeeds, and we should be the last to regret his disappearance. After all, we have things of far greater import to consider than Mr Redmond's position, and it is only the man's mischievous egoism that makes it necessary for a while to remember him.

He was kind enough to tell us that "so far as the war is concerned Ireland's attitude is

unchanged. We shall do nothing calculated to postpone by a single instant the victorious end of the conflict." It is exceedingly amiable of Mr Redmond and the Irishmen (if any) for whom he speaks. But what precisely does he mean by it? Has he made the great renunciation and promised not to ally himself and his friends with England's enemies? Does he by these words promise to observe a not unfriendly neutrality? We neither know nor care. We can only promise him that we prefer to hear him in his more truculent mood. The patronage, which is futile as well as insolent, makes him ridiculous, and he might have learned from his long sojourn in London, that hypocrisy of this kind does not blind the eyes of Englishmen.

The Irish, then, will not postpone our victory! They will take no share in it. And the cause of their reluctance to help, says Mr Redmond, is the ill-behaviour of England. "The real responsibility for what had happened," proclaimed this eminently patriotic statesman, "rested upon the English Government." He had warned it constantly of the situation. "Since the war began the conduct of the Government towards Ireland had been marked by the most colossal ineptitude and stupidity." All of this may be true. We should not expect the conduct of Messrs Birrell and Asquith to be other than inept and stupid. But Mr Redmond forgets one thing: that the policy of Messrs Birrell and

Asquith was dictated by him and by him alone. They were the puppets, and he pulled the strings. Whatever ineptitude and stupidity there were, and we have no wish to under-rate them, were Mr Redmond's. He has been for ten years the parliamentary dictator of Ireland, and we hope that he is satisfied with the mess he has made of it. When he came into power, though not into office, Ireland enjoyed such a measure of happiness and prosperity as had not been hers for six hundred years. Even Mr Redmond must be able to measure the distance his country has fallen from her high estate since the power was put into his hands; and if he have any love for her, if he be anything better than a wire-pulling politician, he should be covered with shame.

The wrong that he has done to Ireland does not in any sense absolve Mr Asquith and Mr Birrell from blame. They sinned through laziness or indifference. The absentee Chief Secretary, who boasted that he was not "pinioned" to Dublin, will be held by history supremely guilty. And Mr Asquith, who refrained from using the word of dismissal, which might have put things right, shares the guilt of his colleague. But Mr Redmond, who now turns upon his confiding friends, cuts the worst figure of all. And he adds to his other sins the sin of giving bad advice to Ireland in this crisis of her fate and ours. He urges her with what force

he may to reject compulsion. "It would be resisted in every village in Ireland," he says; "its attempted enforcement would be a scandal which would ring round the whole civilised world." We do not think so poorly of Ireland as to believe Mr Redmond. And let him remember this: we shall have to live together after the war, and what will be the position of Ireland in the face of a victory, which she has done little or nothing to achieve?

Before Ireland will throw her weight into the scale against Germany, we are told, she must be "free." What she means by freedom she does not explain, nor do we know. She has for a hundred years enjoyed a freedom which is not granted to any of the Dominions, whose constitution she pretends would satisfy her. She has been vastly over-represented in the British Parliament, which we take to be one practical form of "freedom," and she has been "free" to meddle in the government of England and Scotland as she chose. The sworn champion of protection, she has been "free" to fasten upon Great Britain the shackles of free trade. Ireland has, in fact, imposed a far worse and heavier influence upon England than England has upon Ireland, and still she is not satisfied. The Home Rule Bill, which is on the Statute Book, and which is not likely ever to become a reality, does not and cannot satisfy her. What does she want, then? Inde-

pendence is a geographical impossibility, as every one can see who looks at a map. We dare not expose ourselves to the risk of a hostile population at our very doors. Nor is the presence or absence of Home Rule a determining cause of Irish policy. When the Irish enjoyed the blessings of Home Rule they joined the French against England. When they enjoyed the blessings of Union they joined the Germans against us. There is not much difference in the result, and we can say no more than that now, as always, England's difficulty seems to Ireland an opportunity to rebel.

Nor is it England's fault that the Home Rule Bill, which is on the Statute Book, still remains a specimen in a constitutional museum. It is the Irish themselves who make it an impossibility. Were it brought into being at once, it would only reawaken the old hostility of North and South. Were it acceptable to the Nationalists, which we do not believe it would be for a moment, it would still be rejected by the six Counties. Again, when the Irish demand that they should be as Canada or New Zealand, they forget that the financial independence which those Dominions enjoy is not theirs. The leaders of the Nationalist party have devoted themselves heart and soul to spoiling the temper of their supporters, and then cry aloud for a "freedom" which they have always enjoyed. Nor will they understand that be-

fore Ireland can ever attain the Home Rule which she pretends to desire, one thing is imperative—friendship. Mr G. W. Russell, better known as “A. E.,” put the truth in a few lines to an American journalist the other day. This, said he, is the first factor in the Irish problem: “Great Britain must have assurance that self-governing Ireland, when it is fully erected, will be friendly to Imperial interests. Custom and the common-sense of nations always will be behind the British Government in refusing to allow Ireland to set herself up as an independent and hostile country. No nation, no matter how high a political morality it professes, could blame England for refus-

ing Ireland self-government until she could be certain that, when once this was granted, Ireland would be friendly to her.” Truly the past gives no warrant of this certainty. The Irish have been unfriendly to England under Home Rule and under the Union alike. The events of last Easter Day do not reassure us. And now when the chance came to Ireland of fighting her battle and ours side by side with England, Mr Redmond and the agitators were good enough to promise not to postpone the victory! That promise is not sufficient to prove friendship, and until the friendship be forthcoming in a practical and honourable shape it is but waste of time to talk about “self-governing Ireland.”

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THE SCENE OF WAR.—III.

VICENZA.

ALTHOUGH at Udine one was at the headquarters of the Italian Army, the stir of life was at this period to be found at Vicenza; for it was the base from which the affair of the Trentino was being worked. It came about, therefore, that before long I found myself on the road to Vicenza.

The country smiled about me, and the earth was fat with her harvests of corn and wine. The trains were full of the Italian soldiery, some returning from and others going up to war; cheery, strong, and resolute-looking men. It was evident from their faces that the war was popular, and that Italy was glad at last to be at grips with her old enemy.

Vicenza is less happy in its site than Udine, and it lacks the beautiful perspectives of the Castello and the Piazza of Victor Emmanuel; but it is a finer town, enriched by the

genius of Palladio, and by many stately monuments of Venetian supremacy. I shall not easily forget my first impression of the Basilica, as I passed down the Via del Monte, from the crowded and sombre Corso, into the Piazza de' Signori. It was bathed in sunlight, and the white statues along the skyline were transfigured as if they had wings and would fly into space. Upon my right hand there were the rich carvings and pillars of the Municipio, and before me, across the square, were displayed the balanced arcades and beautiful details of the Basilica. So vivid was the sunlight that I could scarcely keep open my eyes as I crossed over to the corner whence Palladio looks with his inspired gaze upon his handiwork. There was an equally lovely vision from the far end of the Piazza, where the

Venetian columns rise, white and slender, in the forefront of the old Campanile.

And here again were the winged Lions of St Marc and the magic impress of the Queenly City to which in those romantic ages Vicenza owed her fealty. In the midst of the square the pigeons fluttered about a group of officers in grey, who threw them some handfuls of corn. Over the shops the cinnamon awnings spread their eastern glow, and the people walked under them, sheltered from the dazzling glare of an Italian sun.

A little way off rose the Duomo, with its lofty choir, and as I entered within its solemn walls, a service was going forward in the Chapel of Montagna's Madonna, the priests in crimson and lace and copes of gold were immersed in their old-world ritual, the censers were swinging, and the organ filled the church with its resounding harmonies. A few miles away, upon the hills, the greatest battle that Vicenza has ever known was going forward, the streets were full of soldiery, and Italy was holding her breath before the Austrian advance. But what trace was there of all this within these secluded walls? The ritual of the hour went forward as of old, and it was as though upon entering one had been plunged into a sudden slumber, and were peacefully dreaming of the Middle Ages.

And yet only last Sunday, some forty hours ago, an Austrian plane in passing had thrown its bombs into the

crowded city and killed its people in the streets. It had hit the hospital where the wounded lay, and shattered more than one building; but it might as well have hit this solemn and beautiful fabric, and slain the congregation on its knees.

Outside in the Corso there was all the stir and movement of War: the ceaseless grind of the great lorries, the rumble of carts laden with hay, and drawn by teams of massive horses; the splutter of motor-cyclists leaving and returning from the front; the monstrous transit of a pontoon bridge in sections that filled the streets; the perpetual movement of officers on foot, and in high-powered cars that dashed past with little of ceremony.

The great palace of Scamozzi was full of soldiers; its courts were thronged with gendarmes who would let no one pass without a permit; and the demand for passports, safe-conducts, credentials, was insistent. Out there upon the mountains men carry themselves with a frank and open countenance, but here in the rear there were furtive looks and veiled suspicions. For wherever the war reaches, there the Boche is busy with his spies, his espionage, his long-planned, deeply-laid intrigues. . . . And the Boche has to be met on his own ground. But here we touch the seamy side of War—the burrowing of the mole, the slime of the rodent in the dark. . . . What wonder that men prefer the battle-front, the open music of the guns?

THE WAR IN THE TRENTINO.

At seven o'clock, the hour appointed for our departure, the Tenente who was to accompany me to the front was still in bed. In Italy, even in these glorious days, one must not expect too much. An hour or so is but an hour or so, and it was with unimpaired good-humour that we met at eight and set out on our journey.

We were to visit scenes that will become historic, and our visit was to be paid at a moment of surpassing interest. For the Austrian thrust in the Trentino was at its height; the possibility of their entering the plain was being openly discussed, and if they were able to do this, the whole of Venetia would be seriously endangered, and the gains on the Isonzo would be lost to Italy.

Such was the general opinion, but the General Staff probably had other views.

We left Vicenza by the Porta Castello, by a special permit, for an Austrian plane was flying over the city; the bells were ringing, and all traffic was suspended in the streets. At such times the populace is warned to take shelter, and a fine of fifty francs is imposed on any one who exposes himself in the streets. This fine has been more potent than the fear of death.

The streets lay clear before us. The chauffeur, a private in the Italian army, with a jewelled ring on his finger

and a light touch on the wheel, was a master of his job; and his thick neck, powerful shoulders, and ruddy cheek spoke of a man in the very prime of life and vigour.

Almost before I had time to take in our surroundings, we were in the small town of Isola Vicentina; the Austrian plane was lost in the void of heaven, and the sound of the air-guns was hidden in the world we had left behind us. Monte Pulgo, some 1600 feet in height, and the green spurs of the Vicentine hills, with their rich woods, rose upon our left. Another swift run and we were at Schio, which is the terminus of a railway that has ceased to run for the convenience of the general public. Here there was just time to notice the stately eighteenth-century church with its classic air, lifted with a bold architectural impulse high above the Place. Never in Italy is one long without such evidences of her ancient civilisation.

We were now ourselves at an elevation of six hundred feet, and before us rose the mountainous defile, the Valli de' Signori, which leads to the Piano delle Fugazze, some 3500 feet higher. All along the road as we had come, I had seen whole regiments on the march; motor-lorries; hay-carts drawn by teams of horses; carts returning with the empty cartridge-cases of the Italian guns; Red Cross motors; all the sights and scenes that are incidental to

a line of communication near the battle front. But in the midst of these, I had also seen the peasantry driving in their waggons along the roads, working in their fields; women before their homes, and children in the streets; and I had not yet heard the thunder of the guns, or looked upon wounded men; and we had moved over an almost level plain.

We were now to enter the precipitous valley of the Leogra, and to climb, and turn, and turn as we made the steep ascent; and ever as we climbed, there were troops by the wayside and hidden guns, and mules and horses, and tents and encampments in increasing numbers. At Tagliato the road ran through a fortress, which was itself commanded by another above it, and here and at two other places on our journey we were stopped by the gendarmes and closely scrutinised, in spite of the Tenente and the soldier chauffeur and his mate in the grey uniform. It was a pleasure to see these men at work. Big and powerful, ruddy of hue, bold and strong of feature, often with the features of ancient Rome, they went leisurely through each Safe-Conduct and necessary paper with a clear and firm decision. They were determined to do their duty; but they did it with a grace and a grave courtesy that could not have been surpassed. At length we reached the Austrian Custom House, now passed out of Austrian keeping, and so climbed to the Hotel of the Dolomites and the headquarters of Lieutenant-

General Bertotti. Here we were evidently in the very thick of events, for the mighty Dolomites rose in tragic forms about us; the neighbouring woods were thronged with men and horses and guns; the wounded were being carried past us in stretchers from the first-aid hospitals, and the air shook from moment to moment with the loud impact of the Italian guns.

A staff officer received us with the courtesy of his people, and proceeded to explain the state of affairs at the moment, upon the great map on the wall.

We were not to be allowed, he said, to climb up to Monte Pasubio. The General, he feared, could not permit that, for military reasons. Moreover, the wire railway to the summit had been destroyed by the Austrian guns, the mule-track which alone served to feed the troops on its summit, to carry up relays of men and to bring down the wounded, was exposed to their fire, and it would take hours to climb up to the top. But we were to be taken to "The Observatory," so that we might look thence upon the valley of the Leno, the Vall' Arsa, and the Austrian positions at Santa Anna.

Speaking generally, the military position this day was as follows:—

Along the Vall' Arsa the Austrians in their recent offensive had forced their way up some two-thirds of the valley as far as Santa Anna, and were held there now by the Italian forces at Parmesan.

On the left they had made a series of bloody attacks on the Pass of Buole, which, if they had been successful, would have cut off the high peak of Coni Zugna, facilitated their advance up the Leno, and exposed the Italian positions at Ala and other points on the Adige to the direct fire of their guns. These attacks had for the moment been repulsed, and *en revanche* the Italians had made a counter-offensive, and taken the heights immediately above Parmesan.

On their right—*i.e.*, looking down towards Rovereto from the Piano delle Fugazze—the key of the Italian position was at Monte Pasubio, some 7000 feet in height, great spurs from which run parallel to the Leno in the direction of the Austrian base at Rovereto. One of these, the peak of Col Santo, 2110 metres high, and another, Monte Testo, 2005 metres high, had been forced from the possession of the Italian army in the recent offensive, but no farther advance was possible in the direction of Vicenza and the Italian plain so long as Pasubio held out.

Farther afield the Austrians, crossing the Terragnolo and seeking a way into Italy by Arsiero and along the valley of the Posina, were stopped by the curve of mountainous positions which, extending from Pasubio to Priafora, were held by the Italian infantry and guns.

At this moment His Excellency came in, a small man in a grey fur-lined coat (for the weather was cold at this altitude), with keen penetrat-

ing eyes, and a brisk manner. After a few kindly words and a humorous wave of his hand at the staff map and the officer who had been expounding it, he retired saying, "Well, you had better go off now in the motor as far as the Inn of Fugazze—it is in Austrian territory—and when you get there, walk up the green hill behind it to our Observatory post, whence you will see before you the valley of the Leno and the whole position down the Vall' Arsa."

And as he spoke the building shook with the concussion of the guns, and their deafening music bellowed throughout the mountains; while their puffs of white smoke came drifting through the pine-trees past the windows of the house.

We reached the inn, and climbed over the green hill to The Observatory, and saw the great view that lay spread before us in all its wonderful interest and beauty.

There in the precipitous, winding valley we could see Parmesan and Santa Anna (Italy and Austria), lying very near each other, with the one sunlight covering them both, and upon the skyline on our left the great ridge of grey-green mountains that extends from Monte Corega splashed with snow, along the Buole Pass to Coni Zugna, a high conical peak, up to which there wound in sharp diagonals a military road. Beyond it the Sierra declined towards the valley of Rovereto.

On our right, below the spot upon which we stood, the white highway of the valley took its

leisured way, descending along the easy middle slopes, the river far below it on the one side, the grim crags and precipices of the mountains high above it on the other, in mass upon mass of tremendous bulwarks and sharply accentuated peaks.

The clouds hung in grey ragged fringes about the summits, and from moment to moment the Italian shells went flying overhead into the blue-green valley, and over the intervening mountains to the Austrian positions beyond. We could not see them, but we could hear them swirling along with an engulfing music as they flew through the air, echoing and reverberating amidst the chasms and bastions of Pasubio.

We could hear less plainly the heavy Austrian artillery; the sudden sharp sting of the mitrailleuse.

The slopes of the wooded mountains from the valley to the Pass of Buole were patterned with the shadows of the passing clouds, and the scene was one of tranquil beauty. Yet it was just here, under the Pass, which looks little more than a knife-edge in the long serrated line of the mountains, and amidst these shadowy woods, that the Austrians had spent the lives of many thousands of their bravest infantry in the vain attempt to carry the Pass.

At our feet there were flowers, and in the trees a summer breeze that came and went.

As though to remind us that life was something more than a spectacle, an Austrian shell

now burst over our heads, but a little behind us on the hill upon whose slopes we were gathered, and its fragments with bits of rock and stone came whistling like hail through the lazy foliage. It had come from Monte Testa, over the intervening heights; and it was followed by another which fell near it, ploughing up the green sward and making a great hole in the turf. It seemed that we had been observed.

We returned to the inn, where a surgeon in a white apron stood by the wayside, and a first-aid hospital was established in a tent under the trees. The wounded came by upon their stretchers, ever so quiet, with their grey cloaks drawn over them—some already unconscious of the world, others just lifting an eyelid to see us standing in the road. But they were all very still, and no one made any stir as they went by, for it was a familiar sight. Only the bearers walked very gently, and there was compassion in their faces.

Up the steep mountain path to Pasubio long files of mules, led by the Alpini, were climbing with military stores and the red carcasses of slaughtered cattle, which swayed from side to side, the blood dripping from them to the ground, as the beasts moved.

Bang! bang! at rapid intervals the guns about us bellowed their music, and for a moment the lifting smoke revealed the batteries hidden amidst the rocks and screens of foliage.

From the belvedere before the hotel we could see down the valley to Schio, and along

the succession of spurs from Pasubio by Forni Alti, Monte Alba, Cogolo, Novegno which we were to visit, as far as Priafora, a bit of whose contour of the palest blue was just visible under the grey curtain of the drifting clouds. This was the nucleus of the Italian positions as far as Arsiero, where the Val Astico embouches on the Italian plain.

It was while waiting here at the General's headquarters that I met a young officer, with a fresh, clear-cut, and clean-shaven face, a powerful figure, and very much the air of a British cavalry subaltern—blunt, amusing, vigorous, and full of chaff. He came of a wealthy family in Rome who had a factory in Belgium, where he remained for several months after the German invasion, and saw the Boche at work. He was now an Officer of Exploration, whose business it was to climb the high and less accessible passes and to search out practicable paths, with a small escort of the rough hill-men whom he cheerfully described as "Banditti." He left upon me a vivid impression of the splendid spirit of the Italian soldiery. He claimed that no troops in the world could have done better, and that few have had to face such extraordinary difficulties and hardships as the Italian Alpini. Guns have been hauled up sheer precipices, "far more difficult than those which you see there," pointing to the almost vertical Dolomitic crags about Pasubio; wounded men have been sent down from almost inaccessible peaks, sus-

pended from the telephone wire and fired at by the Austrian riflemen, as men fire at game. It is a point of honour with this Corps never to abandon its sick or wounded, whatever the difficulties of the ground. There have been times when detachments of the Alpini have been left in the snow, in mid-winter, under a storm of Austrian shells, with only their marching-kit, for three days and nights, unable to stir, while the Austrians have literally swept the snow from about them with their searching fire. They have been frost-bitten in June, and cut off from their base by violent storms in the mountains; and they have been gay and cheery and resourceful and tireless through it all; the men from Sicily and the South entering into this unique life with as much zeal and dash as the most hardened Piedmontese.

And then he laughed. "Not a bad life, as you see" (looking about him with an ironical air), "for have we not everything that a man can desire—fine air, good appetites, plenty of excitement, and nice views; everything—except the society of women."

He accompanied us back to Vicenza on a week's leave, and, by way of meeting this deficiency, started a violent flirtation with the lady next to him at the inn where we lunched.

At dinner, little Monsieur C—— of the 'Lausanne Gazette' showed me an article he had written for his paper describing this visit. It was far better and more complete than my own,—clear, detailed, and authoritative,—and I re-

alised with a pang of regret how much more one man sees than another. The brave little man is fifty-seven, but indefatigable in the pursuit of his calling, and he is here on the Italian front taking his share from month to month of the fortune of war, mainly because he would not dissemble his love for the Allies as a Parliamentary Correspondent at Berne, which was markedly pro-German at the commencement of the war. These long letters of his to his paper are first written in Italian, which is his mother-tongue, and then put by him into French, and posted within a day of the events he describes.

"You are the most civilised people in the world," he tells me; "and we know well that this war is a conflict between a higher and a lower civilisation, and sincerely hope that you will win."

I left him to finish his task, and walked through the quiet streets of Vicenza, past its wonderful old palaces with their Venetian windows, with their Palladian fronts and their inner gardens, and saw the old women sitting quietly before their doors, the girls talking together, as if there were no

war a few miles away; as if an Austrian plane had not twice this month thrown bombs upon Vicenza, shattering its homes and killing its inhabitants; and as if Bersaglieri, despatch-riders, and vans full of troops and officers in motor-cars were not continually passing even at this peaceful hour.

The moon was rising over the Duomo as I came up the Corso, and in a little church on the street there were tapers burning on the altar, and in the mystery and gloom there were silent figures kneeling at prayer. In the Piazza de' Signori, under the moon, the Venetian columns rose into the sky with the grace of dignity, and the Basilica was as fresh and beautiful at this hour as when Palladio built it, and the slim red tower beside it was bathed in the moonlight far above the shadowy city.

What a day it had been! War up there in the mountains, with its extraordinary efficiency—its multitudes of men, its motors, horses, roads, supplies; its wounded and dying; its terrific music; and then here the ancient peace of the old Italian town and its people at prayer.

NOVEGNO.

After the Piano delle Fugazze, which displayed the battle for the Vall' Arsa and the heights above the Adige, I was taken to Novegno, which during the past two days had been subjected to a violent

attack by the Austrians at Priafora. It was the centre of the mountain wall from the Vall' Arsa to the Astico, which the Italians were defending against the Austrian thrust upon the plain of Italy and

the position was one of critical importance. Thousands of men had been hurried up in motors to this point of danger, and a heavy artillery action was still in progress.

Immediately we left Schio it was evident that we were upon the fringe of these great events. Regiments of the Alpini were marching by the wayside, their carts laden with their baggage, tents, and rifles; cavalry officers on reconnaissance rode by with their escorts—a squadron was drinking by a stream, its grey horses contrasting with the fields of waving corn. Before us rose the peak of Novegno, with a new military road ascending to its summit in a series of sharp diagonals, the line of the outer Dolomites sharply cut against the blue expanse of sky.

We left the main road that skirts the plain and turned up a narrower mountain road through vines and corn-fields, cherry-trees in fruit and hedges of thorn, and ever as we climbed we were in the midst of the grey infantry, of regiments of Alpini returning from the battle for their share of repose; firm, strong, and resolute men, showing no trace of their recent experiences under the heavy fire of the Austrian guns. Mules were being led one by one along the side-ways—strings upon strings of them; horses were ranged under leafy stables in the fields; soldiers' kitchens were busy preparing the noonday meal; carts laden with hay and loaves of bread; Red

Cross waggons returning with the wounded; here and there a coffin in which some dead officer was being carried down to his home in the plain; guns, more guns, and waggons laden with shells and cartridges,—all the paraphernalia of war thronged the narrow road, barely leaving us space to pass.

Behind us and below us spread the Vicentine plain; Schio, Thiene, the Astico winding across its green enamelled fields. Above us hovered an Austrian Taube; and upon the skyline, afar off, five little flecks of cotton cloud appeared upon the blue.

The motor faced the great wall of the mountains before us with a splendid energy, turning and ever turning, and often checked by the acute diagonals of the road or the passage of a hospital lorry. At any other time the whole of our thoughts would have been given to this mastering of the road,—to this perfect instrument that was carrying us up a mountain like the wall of a house with a faultless precision. But to-day we took all these things for granted, and our thoughts were given only to the battle in the mountains that developed under our eyes as we ascended.

A steep sierra descends from Novegno towards the plain, and from the valley beyond it there came in rapid succession white puffs of cannon smoke. The batteries on the Sette Comuni belched their noise and smoke, the Austrian

guns exploded their shells, Asiago lay between them a gage of battle.

All that we had read, with but a vague perception, of this fight for the plateau of the Seven Communes, became suddenly clear as glass. There was the plateau, and there the Italians entrenched upon its southern rim, with the plain of Italy behind them; while upon the other side, advancing from their northern strongholds, were the Austrians, eager for their wonted prey.

Meanwhile, above us and about us, the air battle was developing in all its wonderful beauty. I fell to counting the little puffs of shell high up in the summer sky—first one and then another, and then another—expecting each moment that the next would reach its aim; but the Taube flew high and serenely above them; the cloudlets lost their clean outline, faded and floated away into the void. Yet ever as we climbed, turning and turning with a remorseless frequency, the lines ever hardening in the chauffeur's face as he fought with the difficulties of the road, the air battle went on, absorbing all our interest.

Now the Taube was directly over us, motionless, observant as a hawk—now curving towards the sun like a bit of gold on the wing, now invisible for an instant as he turned away; now the centre of a little constellation of his enemies; and the air was filled with the barking of the guns.

High up on the green summit of the hill of Novegno a wooden cross was cut clear against the blue, and by the roadside in the valleys there were chapels with frescoes of the Christ, blessing the little children, preaching Peace upon Earth and goodwill amongst men.

We reached the summit and passed over it into a shallow saucer of green turf and grey stone, in which were the headquarters of the Italian General in Command. Over its farther lip there was Priafora and the Austrian position. We were in the midst, as it were, of the pit of this theatre of the War.

The motor, after its hard labours, rested by the roadside, and we climbed a little way up the turf to the General's hut. He met us there, a big man, over six feet in height, ruddy of hue, with blue eyes, a little white pointed beard, and the genial, comfortable air that makes a man friends as he goes through life. He was clad in a long grey coat trimmed with fur, and received us with the greatest kindness. He had been sent here to meet this emergency, and during the past two days had been in the very centre of a storm of shells, whose ravages were plainly written on the landscape about him. His hut itself had barely escaped destruction; the crater made by a 305 yawned beside it, while the fragment of another had blown away half the wall of his bedroom, leaving a hole that had not yet been repaired. The hillside was literally

scarred with shell-holes, and fragments of the shells lay in plenty about. The bombardment, an artillery officer told me, had been terrific; the telephone wires had been smashed to bits and all communications had for a time been interrupted.

"That made it so important for the General to remain absolutely at the front to see with his own eyes and give his orders on the spot;" and then with a sudden Italian fervour he added—

"Ah! but he is such a *fine* soul,—a really fine man *from within*. He is not only big as you see him."

The General himself spoke in the warmest terms of his men. "In one of our Alpini regiments," he said, "only two officers, a lieutenant and a sub-lieutenant, survived; all the rest were killed or wounded. We are quieter to-day, for they have turned their attention towards Asiago; but yesterday and the day before they concentrated the whole fire of their guns on this position, and as you see," he laughed, "they did some damage. That iron building, of which you see traces there, was hit, and the telephone officer and his men inside it were killed; the Fort over the hill, Monte Rione, was the centre of a storm of shells. We use it as a decoy. But one of our heavy guns there was hit, and another is on the way up; you may have passed it on the way. Quite so! not what you would call a healthy spot."

He spoke cheerily enough,

and his jovial face and manner inspired confidence, but I noticed that when he raised his glass to the success of Civilisation against "*Les Barbares*" his hand shook. For there is a limit to the strain which nerves and muscles will stand, and the General had passed through a very severe ordeal. He had come up at a critical moment and there had been no time to provide for his own safety. It seemed to me, as I looked at his slender hut in the midst of the general destruction, that he and his staff had only escaped by a miracle.

As we talked, there was the sound of frizzling from the kitchen, and the smell of luncheon getting ready, while afar off on the Asiago plateau the guns were thundering with undiminished intensity.

From time to time an observer drew attention to the approach of an enemy's plane.

"*Ecco*," he said, "*un aeroplano nemmico*."

And as the Taube sailed over with its grinding music we withdrew from the sunlight that was so welcome at this height, into the cold blue shadows of the hut.

"It probably means a fresh attack," said the General; and presently a message came up from the telephone to report that the trenches on Monte Giove were being heavily bombarded, and that there were several casualties amongst the advanced sections.

"Let them withdraw into the gun-proof shelters," said he; and to a staff officer—

"There is too much movement in those trenches there. Megaphone to them not to show themselves; the position is too exposed."

Ten seconds later three shells from an Austrian battery of 305's burst in their midst, and the air about us was filled with echoes, and the blue sky was grey with dust and smoke.

"You see," he said, "we have to be careful; but if you had come here early in the

morning you could have looked from Fort Rione upon their positions, and upon one of the finest views in all the world; for our neighbours," he laughed, "are not early risers, and seldom disturb us till the sun is well up in the sky."

And so we left Novegno—and the brave General Pettiti, and the battle on the hills, and took our way down to the plain once more.

PIOVENE.

At Magre, at the foot of the Vicentine hills, there is a little village, which shelters upon the very fringe of War. At Schio, which is near by, there is the perpetual tramp of guns and infantry on the march; its streets are thronged with soldiers, and its inns are so crowded with hungry men that food is to be had only by patient waiting. So we turned away from Schio into the peaceful back-water of Magre, and found there all that any man can ask for in the way of a tranquil hospitality. The daughter of the inn, a blonde-haired beauty of the Titian type, waited upon us, and at the long table of solid wood at which we sat we were served with an excellent meal.

In the cobbled yard, under a pergola of vines, sat the parish priest, sipping his coffee with a benevolent smile; a cat purred at his feet, the inn dog slumbered in the sun. Along the white highway there

passed the slow patient people of the countryside, and War seemed as infinitely remote as if it had never been.

I was myself steeped in this illusion, and in the physical contentment that comes of an appetite appeased, when the motor came up to the door of the inn, and the Tenente observed that we had better be moving.

"At Piovene," he said, "we shall find General Zupelli, the Major-General in command, and turning up the Astico, we shall observe the development of the Austrian attack that is threatening the valley."

So we bade farewell to Magre and the rose-hued daughter of the inn, and the motor raced along the road that runs past San Torso, under the mountains that overlook the Italian plain.

It might have been some ten minutes later that we were rudely awakened to a realisation of the War by the deafening explosion of a shell over our

heads, and soon after we had drawn up at the headquarters of General Zupelli, the late Italian Minister for War.

The scene before us was in singular contrast to that at Magre. A building across the road had been ripped open from top to bottom, and by some freak of chance the only article of furniture that survived the general wreckage was a portrait of two old people, a man and his wife, which hung suspended in a gilt frame over a gaping hole in the wall.

The house adjoining the General's villa lay shattered beyond recognition, its *débris* strewn along the road. Four men had been killed and some twenty-six wounded in this explosion. The villa itself, a graceful Italian building with its back to the hill, a beautiful paved court and wide arcades and terraces descending to the road, was yet untouched, but the statues which graced its terraces lay prone upon their faces, their arms and legs broken, with a curiously human suggestion.

A heavy artillery battle was in progress, and from moment to moment the Austrian shells came swirling over the hill, and the Italian batteries responded with loud and violent explosions.

We put the motor in the yard, where a group of very cheerful soldiers from Egypt was assembled, and entered the darkened chamber in which the General sat at work. It was upon the ground floor, and all but one

of the shutters were closed. He explained the situation, and upon a great map showed the development of the Austrian attack.

"They are now at this moment," he said, "at Monte Cengio, of which they hold the summit and the farther slopes; but upon this side our troops are entrenched, and an attempt made by their infantry to descend the valley of Canaglia and to enter *vid* Cogollo, the Italian plain, has been repulsed, as well as their attack on Monte Pau, which is one of the keys of our position."

"What, then, is the object, General, of their dropping their shells here where we stand?"

"I suppose," he said, with rather a grim smile, "that I am the object of their attention."

It is all very well to pass an hour or two where such things are happening, with the knowledge that in a little while you will be safely out of the way; but it is quite another to be pinned down to a villa, part of which has been blown to pieces, while the rest, with yourself and your belongings, may at any moment follow suit.

The General, I could see, was anxious, but he seemed more concerned for our safety than for his own.

"You will have to be very careful," he said, "and if you are continuing in your motor, I beg of you not to pause by the way. Drive as rapidly as you can, for the position is one of no little danger."

"Très dangereux," he added, shaking his head, "Très dangereux."

We left the motor where it was, and ascended the Observatory Hill behind the villa; and from there the whole scene of the battle lay manifest to our eyes.

Through the profound valley of the Astico the little river came winding on its way from its junction with the Posina near Arsiero. High above it, grey and grim under the ragged fringes of the clouds, rose the heights of Monte Cengio, with the precipitous ravine of the Canaglia descending between it and the Monte Pau; while the long grey-green back of Sunio, with its following peaks, spread away to the Brenta river. It was upon these hills, which are the southern boundary of the Seven Communes, that we had observed from Novegno the progress of the artillery duel in the course of the morning. At their feet lay the carpeted plains, the villages of Caltrano, Calvene, Lugo, exposed to the Austrian shells.

The Italian batteries were concealed in the picture before us, their presence revealed only by the incessant thunder of their guns and their momentary clouds of white drifting smoke. Some were in the plain and others upon the hillside; while in the river-bed, in the midst of a thick wood, a heavy battery belched its fire under the command of a prince of the House of Savoy, the eighteen-

year-old son of the Duke of Aosta. Upon the summit of the Observatory Hill, along whose slopes we were now making our way, another battery was busy responding to the Austrian challenge. Shell after shell from Monte Cengio came whirling through the sky, exploding with a loud overbearing sound, spreading a cloud of dark smoke and *débris*, now over our heads into the Italian battery, now into the villages of Caltrano and Calvene, now by the Prince of Puglie's battery, by the white obelisk and the stone bridge over the river. But one seems to get accustomed to most things, and we soon accepted these astonishing events as a matter of course.

The scene before me was one of the most absorbing interest: beautiful, as Italy is beautiful, with her plains and mighty bulwark; terrible, as the thunder of the guns, the swirling music of the shells passing to and fro upon their destiny, could make it; ominous, for the Austrian shells were already falling upon the long-coveted towns and hamlets of the plain. If Pasubio, Novegno, Sunio were to fall, the hereditary invader would once more sweep upon this ancient people, who have so often suffered at his hands. It was thus the epic contest of two races and of two civilisations upon which we were looking from this our place of vantage.

The wood through which we climbed was heavy with the shade of Spanish chestnuts, dappled with the gold of the sun; the grass under our feet

was green and emblazoned with flowers. Yet in the very path along which we walked there lay half buried the fragments of recent shells; the turf was flung up and scattered in brown patches, as a horse flings the turf from under his feet; and as we left the wood and emerged upon the open summit of the hill, there was a hole in it big enough for an elephant, made by an Austrian 405, that had fallen upon this delectable spot.

We had, of course, no business to be here at all. The Observatory to which we had started out to climb was no longer a tenable position, the battery had been withdrawn to a more sequestered point, and an observer whose head peeped out from the ground warned us to take cover as speedily as possible, for the place had become a target for the enemy's guns.

We returned, therefore, to the wood, and walking along its edge came to the new position, whence an officer signalled to us mutely to lie down.

I for one was glad to get a rest here after the heavy climb.

After a while the Colonel sent an officer to say that he could not leave his post of observation and the telephone, but the Tenente would explain the position; which he did in a whisper, while the guns banged behind us with loud, explosive voices, the shells of both the combatants shrieked overhead, and the Austrian 405's fell in the valley with terrific sound. My nearest neighbour was a young "Egyptian" corporal, who had the

Cross for Valour on his breast, and I was charmed, whenever I could turn my eyes from the scene of the conflict, with the gay and debonnair smile upon his face. For here was one whose spirit exulted in danger.

Then we went on, and followed the path once more, along the wood's edge, to the crest over Piovene; down the winding road with its finger-posts pointing to the various batteries; past mules carrying up fresh supplies of shells, right under an Italian battery, whose gunners, in their blue steel helmets, looked at us curiously through the screen of leaves; saw a man severely wounded and apparently dying, for his body lay limp on the stretcher and his face was covered with a handkerchief, being carried down to the first-aid hospital in the village; saw men in reserve resting along the sheltered side of the road, somewhat strained and out of humour; reached a fountain where we drank from their water-bottles; and so got back to the Church of Piovene, with its soaring tower of stone, and the General's villa, to the motor; and tore back to Schio, as the shells were falling in increasing numbers in the plain, sending up great columns of dark smoke; and presently were safe as if we were a hundred miles away from the seat of war.

It had been a wonderful day, rich in experiences, and it had brought a modern artillery battle home to one in the most explicit way. No doubt it must be terrible when the

shells are actually falling on one, killing and maiming one's companions and friends; but we escaped precisely that experience, though we got rather nearer it than any one intended.

Near Schio the artillery officer who had come with us from Novegno left us to visit the other half of his battery, and in leaving thanked us for giving him a lift, in the straightest, most chivalrous way imaginable.

I heard him say to the Tenente in his rich Italian voice, "*La ringrazio estremamente per la suagentezza.*"

He had arrived but the night before from Albania, still wore his blue steel helmet, and was full of geniality and good fellowship, without a trace of arrogance, but with a fine noble sort of air—soldier and gentleman in one.

As we went on, we passed

once more through long columns of Alpini returning from the front, their mules carrying their mountain-guns, the men equipped with pickaxes, staves, rifles; the mules with food, ammunition, tobacco, cigars, all in separate labelled boxes, with hay and oats, with heavy hobnailed boots, tents, cooking-pots, and even a sewing-machine!

"Everything," said an officer, "that men in the mountains can require they have with them."

These mountain gunners were superb men, big of limb, erect, bold, and handsome of countenance. Bronzed and reddened by the sun, covered with the dust of the wayside, long on the march, but patient, strong, and unwearied, they were a wholly admirable and splendid company of men. It was an honour to travel upon the same road with them.

VENICE IN WAR TIME.

Venice in war time is like the Sleeping Beauty: in danger of being slain before she can open her eyes to an expectant world. She is other things as well, amongst them a base of the Italian Navy; and for these and other reasons she is jealously guarded; but it is in her old-time character as the Queen of Cities that most of us adore her, and so will continue to do. I was glad, therefore, to have visited her in her hour of danger; and as yet seriously unhurt. But in a war like this one never knows what

the morrow may bring forth. Rheims, Louvain, Arras, Ypres; must Venice be added to their number?

After leaving Mestre, crowded with troops on their way to the Isonzo front, and still obsessed by visions of War, I was suddenly seized with an impression of clarity and of a luminous horizon. It was the sunlight reflected on the lagoons, in whose midst afar off I could see the domes and campaniles of the City of Cities.

It was a new sensation, for

hitherto it had been my fortune to arrive at Venice at midnight, and to pass as in a dream from the shuttered train into the gloom and wonder of the canals; and so to that side-door in the Rio del Vin, which ushers one into Danieli's and its warmth and glow of hospitality. But to-day I came in the full sunlight, and found the famous inn all but empty; and this was June!

I had even to call aloud before a waiter came running in haste from the inner hall, where even at midnight one was welcomed by half a dozen persons.

Some white tables were spread at the farther end, and in all we were a company of eight people. The manager shook his head; the waiter looked apologetic; and Danieli's was as it were on board-wages. The annexe was now become a Military Hospital, and as I looked out of my bedroom window, my neighbour across the gleaming canal was a soldier in grey, with his head bound up in a white bandage.

The Palace of the Doges was built up with bricks on its ground floor, and with timber supports under its beautiful arches. St Marc's was half hidden behind a wall of sandbags, and its horses were taken away and placed in a cellar for safety. But the priceless building could not be moved, and it stood there in all its opulent beauty, exposed to the hazard of War. There were dim lights still burning on its altars, and at stated

hours the worshippers still gathered for prayer. One passed it with a shudder for the fate that might yet be in store for it.

Opposite, there rose the Campanile, more beautiful than I had ever seen it before, a vision of light and grace—a thing re-born; but even here the sandbag and the palisade were evident. The Piazza, which at this season is prone to be so full that one can scarcely walk in its galleries with comfort, was all but empty. The pigeons had it almost to themselves. At Florian's, at five o'clock, I was the only customer. A sentry with his bayonet fixed marched outside the Palace. The famous shops were either closed or were selling off, and near the Quadri a Red Cross flag drew attention to things for sale at scrupulously low prices.

In a glass box there lay in a confused heap a wonderful collection of gold and silver trinkets, and old jewellery, and a hundred other things of some value, thrown into it by the patriotic.

I took the water. All the great hotels were hospitals, with sick and wounded men in grey at their windows. The Giudecca was thronged with torpedo-boats; a small cruiser lay by the Public Gardens; armed launches raced up the Grand Canal. Gondolas were few and far between, and the old *gondolieri*, who pull in your boat for a halfpenny, looked in their tattered guise like denizens of an Italy that had ceased to exist. They were not of kin

with the clean, firm, determined men in the grey uniforms, who crowd in their tens of thousands the white highways and the mountain passes—the re-conquered soil of Italy. For these are a new people.

But the city lay beautiful as ever in the sunlight, like a precious jewel carefully guarded, immortal in her manifestation. In the late evening San Giorgio Maggiore was bathed in amber light, and the columns of the Lion and St Theodore stood out like the portals of a magic world. On the other side the mysterious gloom of the Merceria drew one like a page of the Arabian Nights. The red masts from which there once fluttered the emblems of Cyprus, of Candia, of the Morea, stood proudly beautiful in the empty Piazza; aloof yet suggestive of the tides that are once more sweeping from Italy about those shores.

As I sat by the little windows that open with an unrivalled charm upon the Schiavoni, and saw the world passing, ascending, and descending the Bridge outside, it was mostly grey soldiers that I saw, where in bygone times I have looked upon an endless stream of

beautiful women, and of travellers from the ends of the earth. The stakes by the Piazzetta stood lean and solitary and forlorn. At the Cappello Nero I dined in the company of naval officers and soldiers. There was not a woman in the room. The city, I was told by many, was dull just now, and hardly worth visiting; but indeed its beauty was as great as I have ever known it, and a dignity as of sacrifice and truth lay upon it, that shed a greater glory upon it than all the murmur and the stress of the thronging world that makes a pleasure haunt of it at other times.

And at the Church of the Scalzi I learnt of the tragedy that Venice has so far escaped. The lovely ceiling was blown to bits, and the floor was littered with the *débris* of the roof. The workmen were busy putting up a scaffolding to restore the building; but there are some things that can never be restored.

As I came away across the shining lagoons, their stillness was broken by the impact of the guns bellowing out their music of war upon the Isonzo front.

THE WAR IN THE DOLOMITES.

In this war that embraces the world, that extends in its tragic and terrible incidents from the Falkland Islands to the Arctic seas, from the sands of the desert to the summits of mountains veiled in

perpetual snow and ice, it cannot be given to any man to see more than his little portion. I was therefore grateful for all that I had seen. But there was, as it happened, one more episode, and it carried me into

perhaps the most romantic area of the war.

While at Udine I had asked a young officer who, while he was still scarcely fledged from the schoolroom, had visited the Himalaya and explored with de Filippi some of the highest lands in the world, where I could best obtain an impression of the grandeur and beauty of the Italian Front, and he had said at once at the Tofana and the Cristallo, by Cortina d'Ampezzo. So to Cortina I went.

The road, leaving the plain of Italy at Treviso, ascends the valley of the Pieve to Belluno, which, for reasons which will be apparent from a study of the map, is the headquarters of the Army Commander in this region of the war. It is a country dominated by two memories; the one of Venice, the other of Napoleon. Bassano, Treviso, Feltre, Belluno; who ever heard these names without thinking of the great Captain, who shed about him such a glory that even his Marshals remain, after a hundred years, enshrined in the thoughts of men? But at Belluno itself one can think only of Venice, for it carries the immortal impress of the Great Republic.

Upon arriving there I called at the Army Headquarters, and was shown into the room of General Fabri, the Chief of the Staff. In him I found a wise and helpful friend. At my request he telephoned to Udine to ask what had become of the Tenente who was to have accompanied me on this visit, and mean-

while spoke to me of the Front and its extraordinary difficulties, spreading before me the most remarkable series of panoramic maps of the Tofana and Cristallo and other peaks and valleys, taken from aeroplanes, and with long-distance lenses.

The Italian photographs are unrivalled for their beauty, and these showed me not only the configuration of the mountains in a very striking way, but every detail of the valleys, their church-towers, their clusters of houses, their fields and pasture-lands, and their connecting ribbons of white roads. I pointed to one that lay there, as it were, smiling before me in its corporate life and beauty, but he shook his head a little sadly and said—

“Destroyed — and by our own artillery fire.”

He spoke, it was evident, with the regret of a man kindly by nature and trained by centuries of an old civilisation; and one realised at once the gulf that divides such men from the Boche with his cold sneering face and hard lips, who thought it a good thing to shoot a lonely and devoted Englishwoman; and from all who are responsible for the destruction of Louvain and of Rheims.

“When you go to Cortina,” he said, “you must go to Col, where my son is an officer of Alpini, and he will help you to see all that you wish to see of the frontier there. But stay—I will write you a line of introduction,” and as he turned to write he put his

hand into a drawer and pulled out a photograph.

"My son," he said very simply, but with a tender inflection in his voice; and at the same moment, as chance would have it, the door opened and his son was announced.

The young man bowed very gravely and respectfully to his father,—the Captain of Alpini to the Major-General and Chief of the Staff.

The General explained that he wished me to be taken up by Pieve di Cadore and the valley of the Auronzo to La Misurina, and thence round by Cortina to Belluno. This, he said, would give me an idea of the country and its exceptional character, and later I could go up one of the mountains and see it at more leisure. He had asked Lieutenant — to accompany me, as he spoke English very well.

"If you are staying a couple of days," he added, "I will get some of those photographs printed for you."

The Lieutenant on entering proved to be a mighty man,—a cavalry officer with an English air. As soon as we had left the more formal surroundings of the General's room, he unburdened himself.

"Sure," he said, "my tutor was an Irishman, and I am certain that we shall get on. I daresay you will notice that I speak English with a bit of a brogue;" and it was so.

This officer was an accomplished chauffeur, and he drove the red Fiat with a skill and vigour that would take no refusal. Our way lay up the

valley of the Pieve, amidst bold and massive scenery, and along a road that was perfect in its surface and gradation; a triumph of Italian engineering. It carried us before long into the little town of Pieve di Cadore, where a statue of Titian graced the market-place. For it was here that the great master first saw the light in the days when Venice ruled these mountains. Before us rose into the sunlit sky the superb masses of the Marmarole, while upon our right there was Monte Tudajo. But these names give no more than a sound to the splendour of the Dolomites, which climbed about us in an amphitheatre of grey and silver, to heights that dazzled our eyes with their beauty and splendour.

We now bore up the valley of the Auronzo, and passing by the townlet of that name ran through the Forest of St Marc, which in bygone days supplied Venice with her ships; and so looked upon the startling beauty of Sorapiss, which soared in a series of snow-white grey-fluted pinnacles and bastions, to a height which might have been the very summit of the world, though the maps show it as something under ten thousand feet.

The Dolomites are well-known to the traveller, and I had once had a glimpse of their visionary beauty over the meadows and fields of flowers which make the Southern Tyrol so entrancing a world in itself, but here by some magic I was in their very midst. It is a world that is

as gigantic as it is fairy-like and beautiful. Those mighty citadels and sharp-edged blades look as if they had been designed by some God for his own purposes of War; but the light on them, the wisps of cloud that float about them, suggest the intervention of a spirit radiant with the joy and the wonder of life.

It was here in the midst of this astounding world, in a small house by the wayside, that General Fabri had had his headquarters through the winter as a Brigadier before he passed on to his present post on the Army Command; and I was tempted to wonder how any one living in the midst of a world of such haunting beauty could give his mind to the iron business of war.

And yet War is romantic here, in a degree that is perhaps unequalled anywhere in the world. The woods are beautiful with tapering firs, the green meadows are bright with flowers, by the wayside the stream runs its appointed course to the sea; the memory of the Great Republic endures in the towns in the lower valley, in the stately houses of that Gothic type that was peculiar to Venice,—in these very woods, and even in these crystalline peaks; for if you look up at Sorapiss, you will see there one that soars up some eight thousand feet, that is still known by men as The Peak of the Doge.

As we turned away towards La Misurina, there was Cristallo, gigantic on our left, Cristallino, a miracle of beauty,

and before us the Austrian frontier, the Three Peaks of Lavaredo reaching like fingers up to heaven, and those other marvels that veil their splendour like our Himalayan K. 2, under the prose of the Numbers Eleven and Twelve. All these were strongly defended with trenches and guns, and we stood here in this fairyland in the very midst of a mighty theatre of war.

At La Misurina we came upon a little lake, and beside it the General's headquarters; and on learning that the road beyond to the heavy batteries in position under the Monte Piana was practicable for the moment, we continued our journey on foot. It is not always so, for this strip of country that runs downhill from Italy to Austria, beautiful and infantile, the haunt of pleasure-seekers and the newly wed, is now seldom immune from the searching fire of the Austrian guns.

At La Misurina I noticed a big hole in the wall of the General's inn that had been made by a recent shell, and across the emerald waters of the lake a summer hotel that had had its roof blown in by another. It was manifest in these and many other ways that war had laid its heavy and brutal hand upon the scene.

Yet there is, I suppose, no gentler, no more charmingly courteous man in the world than the little General Ferrari, who lives here in the inn with the hole through it; and when I went in to call on him, he ordered tea at once, and in-

sisted on pouring it into my cup through the little silver strainer which he held with his other hand, as though he had been serving his granddaughter. Courtesy comes easily to most—if not to all—Italians; but it seems to increase the nearer you get to the Front. Perhaps it is because the true soldier prefers to be found there; perhaps because it is there that the life of cities, with its varying currents and its conflicting streams, is changed to the primal issues of life and death.

As the General talked to us, his Staff stood about him like members of one family. It was a bare uncarpeted room, but upon its walls there were superb pictures of the soldiers' life in the mountains, more graphic than any words.

The General chuckled over the German naval victory of Jutland. "It grows less and less," he said, making a little diminishing movement with his fingers, "every day, and soon there will be nothing of it left,—nothing whatever at all!"

"And how many troops have you now in the field? And when do you expect to move?" All this with great civility; although one knew that there were many misunderstandings prevalent in Italy at that time regarding the British share in the War.

"And here is the latest news from the Russian Front. It comes to us daily by telephone, and is rapidly distributed along the trenches. It keeps us, you see, in touch with the world in spite of our limitations," and

he smiled as he pointed through the window to the havoc of the shells outside.

The road along which we took our way was bordered on one side of the narrow valley through which it ran by lush meadows of peaty soil, which had been literally ploughed up by the Austrian shells. Hundreds upon hundreds of them had been flung with the recklessness of rage into this beautiful valley. In many of the holes there were now translucent pools, in which all the beauty of the Dolomites was mirrored: and it was somewhere in this neighbourhood that I had the luck to see an Italian battery of 305's in action.

A heavy gun at home is a wonderful thing. This one lived in a circular space like a bear-pit, and if you were in a hurry you might easily have passed it unnoticed; for though it stood but a yard or two from the road, it was screened by a semicircle of fir-trees that had been brought from elsewhere and planted like Christmas trees about it. At the moment when I first saw it, it lay with its nose down like a great reptile asleep. Beneath it there was a bed of concrete made to yield to its reaction, and with the powerful springs which sustain it, to break the force of its violent retreat. Behind it in the hillside there were trenches lined and roofed with fir and packed in the inner spaces with the green branches; and here there were many strange things of a secret and subterranean kind.

For instance, there was the inner cave with some forty feet of hillside above it as a roof, in which the gun's provender was kept, safe and sound: a mass of quiescent death and destruction awaiting the fulfilment of its destiny. Then there was a sliding panel in the trench wall, like one of those hiding-places the mediæval romancer loves, behind which rifles were stored to meet an unlooked-for attack, and there was the little bureau or office-room—one always comes back you see to the human brain—in which the officer commanding the battery does his work of control. On the wall there was a telephone, and upon a lofty peak that rose up, grey and shining with silver snow—the *Cristallino*—there was an observer who could tell him all that there was to be seen from that superb position of outlook.

Of what he could see that was of interest to the battery there was a small map roughly drawn on the Commander's table, and here I found depicted a railway line, a railway station, an hotel, and certain other things. Every shot that was fired from this almost subterranean place was noted by the man up there in the midst of the snow and ice of the *Cristallino*, and its effect reported through the telephone. And thus it came that the seemingly blind envoy was in reality a creature instinct with a definite aim and purpose—a thing of almost conscious life.

To see a 305 fired for the first time is to have an ex-

perience that one does not easily forget. It is all very slick, and quiet, and pre-ordained; and the human element that works it is a happy family inspired by but a single purpose and will. There is no Prussian pedantry here in Italy, and officers and men are comrades and friends.

First, if you wish to know, the inner lining of the gun is given a good bath of glycerine, then one of the big shells from the niche in the wall is nipped by the claws of a travelling crane and gently deposited in a receiver by the gun. This swings round and places the shell in position; a little push that savours of persuasion, and it is safely home in its place; and a little more, and this dread and terrible thing will have gone irrevocably on its way.

And that little more consists of a small loose sack of ballistite that looks as innocent as charcoal; but a flash applied to it converts it into a very devil of explosive wrath, who sends the great shell with a furious thrust upon its marvellous flight high over the intervening wall of the mountains, to its bourne some eight or ten miles away.

By the side of this little sack of explosive, and before the door is closed upon this terrific event, there is thrown in, as it were by hazard, a little bit of stick, whose simple purpose it is to keep the shell from sliding down out of its place when the barrel of the gun is raised. It is these artless extras that always

fascinate one in the midst of the most complex machinery.

The next step is to lay and to point the gun, and this is where the captain's brain and the telephone message from the snowy height of the Cristallino come in.

And now at last the fateful moment has come. A gunner stands holding a bit of string—it is only a bit of string—he gives it a pull,—and the world seems suddenly in convulsion. There is a blinding flame, a cloud that is like the pillar of fire, and through its midst a dark momentary object gliding upon its way. That is what one sees; but one's frame responds through all its nerves and tentacles to the tremendous concussion; and one's ears are filled with a roar that is beyond the roaring of all the lions in the world. It echoes and re-echoes, reverberating through all the circuit of the surrounding Dolomites. And its sound is like the very tramp of Doom.

A few seconds more and the missile has fallen,—who knows with what consequences to the men in that far invisible valley beyond? and not only to them, but to those who pray and hope and send forth their appeals for intervention to the personal goodness of God.

Sometimes they have very narrow escapes. Thus, a previous shell from this gun fell within fifty yards of a moving train; but had it fallen that distance nearer to the right it must have fallen plumb into the middle of it and left very little of it in exist-

ence; and there would have been rejoicings in the gun-pit and in the little bureau, and sorrow and lamentation upon the other side.

To-day the message from the watcher on the Cristallino is a singular one. There is a wind down in the valley, he says, and the shell has fallen a little short. Only to think of it, that even this terrific thing, which moves upon its way as if nothing on earth could deflect it from its purpose, is subject to such impalpable influences!

The Battery Commander marks it all down on his chart and in his notebook, and is as solid and self-possessed as you or I might be when entrenched behind an office table; but his eyes—ah, his eyes are eloquent. They are bright and incandescent; they shine in the darkness with a sudden glow as though some part of his own soul had gone out with that shell upon its way.

Then he takes me across to his place of habitation—the little wooden hut in which he has spent the last eight months of his life. It is as simple as the chamber of a nun. There is his little bedroom, with just enough of space for a camp-bed, a small writing-table, some racks upon the wall. The nose of an Austrian 305 serves to keep the door ajar. An atlas he used at school lies torn into ribbons by the fragment of a shell; the wooden walls are pitted with little holes. Life is not very safe for him even here.

In the battery canteen ad-

joining there is a yet more remarkable sight. It is a copper bucket perforated with holes, and it was in this bucket that a man was weighing out a charge of ballistite when a shell from the enemy exploded and riddled it like a sieve. The big gun itself was not exempt. I see in it a deep dent as though it had been made by a steel axe, and several small wounds, as one might say, in the barrel, made by the square ingots that burst out of an Austrian shell. These wounds have been neatly healed, but one can see the patches quite nicely in the polished surface of the steel.

Under the green fir-trees by the road's edge there are the graves of the men of the battery who have been killed.

It was in the canteen also that I saw one of those little things that so often impress one more than the big ones. It was a scrap of a typewritten message from the telephone to say that the Austrian army had been cut in two near Cernowitz by the Russian advance. I felt the immense yet subtle power that lay in that fluttering bit of paper. It told me that Everything Counts. It said that every success heartens those who are on the winning side, that every loss is felt throughout the armies of the losers—more by some perhaps than by others—but to a certain degree by all.

Only the other day I received a little souvenir of my visit from the officer in command of this battery with the following message, warm with

Italian feeling—a message to one who was no more than a passing acquaintance:—

“Con la piu viva ammirazione e sentite congratulazioni per la vittoriosa avanzata dell'Esercito Inglese—bene augurando per le future azioni e per la vittoria degli alleati.—Affettuosamente devotissimo, Capitano V——A——.”

And when I opened it here in England I saw once again the little battery canteen and the little slip of paper fluttering there with its news of our long-hoped-for advance on the Somme. It is true that we are for the most part an articulate people, and that the great victories speak for themselves; but it is the little things that mount up, and no effort should be spared in the days now coming to keep in touch with our friends. In *feeling*, as well as in fact, we must be One. But this was not so in those days, and I was often conscious of misunderstandings that could very easily have been removed.

Before leaving the Battery, we climbed a little way up the turfed hillside, where the Austrian fire had been heaviest, and looked from there into a No Man's Land, that was too deadly a place for any one to live in. And yet it was enticing in its beauty and its tranquil charm. Amidst the serried fir-trees wound the white road to Schuderbach, past a little summer hotel; and round an inviting corner there was the Via Allemagna, the

great military road of the Germans through the Dolomites. Upon the other side it swept along by the base of Cristallo to the lovely valley of Cortina. Straight before us rose the big brown flanks of the Monte Piana that was like an Italian bulwark in the face of the enemy. From this near side we could see the mule track winding upwards with its traffic of supply; and on its far side, though concealed from our vision, were the Italian trenches, under the fire of the Austrian guns. The Col of Mezzo, some 7000 feet in altitude, was hidden by this intervening hill, but we could see the Three Peaks of Lavaredo, and the tops of the Dodici, glittering like swords in the amber light.

Leaving this favoured spot, we motored over the old frontier line into the valley in which Cortina d'Ampezzo lies enshrined. On our way there was another battery of 305's concealed in the pine-woods, and belching out its roar and music of destruction; but my mind was now too absorbed by the beauty of the scene, and the evening sunlight playing upon the mighty peaks of the Tofana across the valley, to give it much attention. The low green slopes were soft as velvet, and the long shadows and glow of evening lent them a wonderful depth and richness of surface that was in striking contrast with the bare, grey, snowy citadels and

peaks, now slowly turning to yellow and rose.

We did not stop in Cortina, but went across the valley to Po Col, and spent an hour with the officers of an Alpini regiment. Here I was shown their workshops, in which they make all their telephones and instruments, their stores of mountaineering requisites, and a portable impromptu trench which an officer had just invented. Many of these officers spend years up in the mountains, and, as they tell me, seldom go down into the Italian plain. They all speak with admiration of their men, and take pride in their exploits.

One of the most remarkable developments of this war is the way in which the infantry of the plains of Lombardy, and of the far South, have adapted themselves to the life of these high altitudes—rivalling the very mountaineers and the trained Alpini in their splendid deeds. You have to see the mighty mass of the Tofana and its Olympian peaks glittering with snow in mid-summer—and then to be told that the Italian troops took those summits, evicted the Austrians from their tremendous vantage-points, and installed their guns and dug their trenches up there, and stuck to them all through the winter—to realise what the Italian army has done, and what difficulties, as in some Titanic conflict, it has overcome.

ODYSSEUS.

ANOTHER SIDE-SHOW : THE CAMEROONS.

A KNOWLEDGE of geography has never been a strong British characteristic, and as the Cameroons is only one of the numerous colonies in the "Dark Continent," it was only to be expected that very few Englishmen should know where it is. After the war had lasted a year, the majority of people were still rather hazy as to its whereabouts, beyond a vague idea that it was "Somewhere in Africa." Men home from the Cameroons had some curious things said to them in the first year of the war; their questioners either thought that they were in the Cameron Highlanders, or else made some such remark as—"Oh yes; how nice. Er—somewhere near Dar-es-Salam, isn't it?" Or—"There's been no fighting there for a long time, has there?"

This was not to be wondered at, as ours was a very small show compared to the war in Europe; and in the early days our campaign was under the Colonial Office, who, after announcing the earlier reverses, did not appear very enthusiastic about our successes. Besides, we were never honoured with the presence of any "Special Correspondent" or cinematograph operator.

The Cameroons is bounded by Nigeria to the N.W. and the French Congo to the S.E. In the extreme north it runs up to Lake Chad, which used

to be French, British, and German. The sea lies to the S.W. The little colony of Gabun, or Spanish Guinea, juts into the Cameroons at the S.W. extremity. It will be seen that the Cameroons was practically surrounded by Allied territory, with the small but important exception of Gabun.

The French territories in West and Equatorial Africa were garrisoned by troops of their Colonial Army. In this case they were mostly "*tirailleurs Sénégalais*"—tall, loose-built men, black as ebony, fine fighters, who have done yeoman service in Africa and also in Europe.

The Germans and ourselves had both adopted the same system in the Cameroons and throughout our West African colonies—namely, native troops with Regular officers and a certain number of British N.C.O.'s. These officers and N.C.O.'s are "seconded" from their British regiments for a term of duty with the West African Frontier Force, or "Waffs." This force arose from the old Niger Company's Troops, Gold Coast Constabulary, and similar bodies in our West African colonies. It has a good record to look back upon; some portion or other is nearly always on service—the "scrapping" varying from quite big shows like the Ashanti War and Relief of Kumasi, the campaigns

against the Mahommedan Emirs of Northern Nigeria, the Aro and other campaigns in Southern Nigeria, down to little company and half-company patrols against turbulent pagan tribes.

The chance of fighting of some sort, coupled with good pay and leave, has always kept up a steady flow of officers and N.C.O.'s to the W.A.F.F. The number of Regular officers who have been, at some time or other, with the W.A.F.F. is surprising, considering its small size. For the most part it is scattered all over the country in detachments of a company or less; but each battalion has its own headquarters, which is generally a big (for West Africa) station; and life in these is very similar to that in a small Indian station. The distances, especially in Nigeria, are very great, and the railway system has not been fully developed, so there is often a considerable amount of "trekking" to be done.

I joined a Northern Nigeria battalion in the early months of 1914, and after a little time at headquarters proceeded to an out-station. It was only then, I must confess, that I first heard of the Cameroons. One day in the company office my skipper led me up to a map of West Africa, and putting a large finger on a certain part of the Cameroons, he said, "There, my boy, that's the place we shall probably have to go for if there is war with Germany," and suggested I should study

the War Office confidential intelligence report of the Cameroons. This was some months before the war, and it did not make much impression on me at the time. As a matter of fact, the company I was in did its best to get to the place my skipper had indicated, but was hauled back ignominiously.

The life in our station went its usual course of work and sport—musketry, field training, inspections, with polo, tennis, and shooting—for the first half of 1914. The *Serajevo* assassinations produced some impression, but it wore off. Our company had orders to move to a bush station some hundreds of miles away, and we were getting ready for the move, when, towards the end of July, Reuters told us of the complications arising in Europe. Next we heard that all moves were cancelled, and then came the first declaration of war. More days of suspense followed. We were ignorant if England would come in, and if she did, whether there would be any fighting in West Africa. There were precautionary troop movements on the railway, and we, sitting still, felt more stranded than ever. At last we got orders to move to another place on the railway and await orders. We moved that afternoon, and then got orders to move, by rail and river, to another place. We picked up some other companies on the way, and it was only on our arrival that we heard war had been de-

clared between England and Germany two or three days before. On arrival at our destination we found that a body of troops had left only the day before, going up-river towards a strong German post near the frontier. There had been a misapprehension as to intentions and orders, and so we set off up the river too, "marching to the sound of the guns." We had a great send-off, nearly all the station turned up at the wharf, and away we went up-stream, one big stern-wheeler with barges tied alongside. We were a cheery party; the men were full of excitement about the prospect of the "buban yakki" (big war), and the majority of us had never been on active service before. The prospect is more alluring to those who have never seen it than to those who have.

However, after we had been steaming for two days, a telegram of recall was sent to a riverside station, and they brought it out to us. "Return with all speed," it said. Accordingly we steamed back as fast as we could, feeling very gloomy, but hoping all the time that we might be sent off somewhere else immediately. On arrival we were speedily undeceived. There followed another period of waiting. We did not know if any of us were to go on service, and if so, where to. We filled up the time with training, overhauling equipment, and all the little incidentals which occupy troops expecting soon to go on service.

After a fortnight a telegram arrived at Mess one night, saying that an overseas force was being formed, and giving its composition. Our company was in it, so now we had something to go upon. All this time we were very much in the dark as to the course of events in Europe. The Reuters, quite optimistic, talked about the heavy losses inflicted on the Germans by the Belgians. We even heard the rumour that there had been a big fleet action and nineteen German ships sunk. This was confirmed by the Lieutenant-Governor, and we were very indignant with those who came out to us from home, and who had left England after the outbreak of war, when they told us there was no truth in it. Towards the end of the month the news got worse, and we gradually got to hear about the retreat from Mons. At the same time our own local news was bad—our Mounted Infantry had suffered heavy European casualties in carrying a village: then worse news—the infantry had made a night attack on Garua, and after nearly achieving success and capturing one of the forts, ammunition had given out, they had been counter-attacked, pushed back, and had lost heavily in officers and men. So altogether things did not look very cheerful. A few days afterwards we set off down river,—to Forcados this time. The first news of the Marne came in just before we left. We reached Forcados, near the mouth of the river

Niger, on September 13th, and there we had another wait of a week. We were cheered up by fuller news of the battle of the Marne and the advance to the Aisne; and we felt we wanted some cheering up, as the prospect of a week at Forcados was not inviting. Forcados is one of the most gloomy spots in West Africa, which is saying a great deal. It stands on a reclaimed swamp, with the grey river on one side, and on the other three mangrove swamps, with the dense tropical jungle in the background. We also heard at the same time of the defeat of Nigerian troops at Sana Kang, and the loss of two guns. This was really a brilliant piece of work on the part of the Germans. They concentrated a larger force than was expected, worked their way round in the dense bush by good woodcraft, and surprised our troops, an isolated detachment. The fighting was desperate; our troops were nearly wiped out—only a few managed to cut their way through—but they inflicted such heavy casualties on the enemy that it immobilised them in that locality for some time.

At last we were off. We embarked on two coasting boats, and lay the night of September 20th anchored just over the Forcados bar. The ships were not very big, and there was a bit of a swell, so sea-sickness was fairly general. The next morning we weighed anchor and soon afterwards picked up the rest of the convoy. There were some quite large-sized ships in it,

among others the s.s. *Appam* which was captured by the *Moewe*. A great number of our troops had never seen any water but the Niger, or any ships other than the river boats, so it was all new to them—including the sea-sickness, which they could not understand. A sea-sick black man is about as miserable an object as can be seen anywhere. There was a light cruiser escorting us,—H.M.S. *Challenger*,—and we felt quite safe under her wing. She, especially, produced a great impression on our men.

About this time we all learnt we were going to Duala, the capital of the Cameroons, which rumour reported was a veritable Port Arthur. Fortunately rumour proved a lying jade. Two or three mornings after our start we found ourselves passing between two very high peaks: Fernando Po to starboard, the Cameroon Mountain to port. It was a fine sight.

A few hours afterwards we came in view of our immediate destination—the mouth of the Warri or Cameroon River. There was a larger British cruiser there—H.M.S. *Cumberland*—and a few other ships, and soon after we were joined by the French contingent from Dakar, escorted by one of the curious, top-heavy-looking French cruisers. At last the expedition was assembled. Another period of waiting ensued. We began to sort ourselves, and find out what troops were in the expedition. We had only black troops—Waffs,

both artillery and infantry from Northern and Southern Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and Gambia; the West African Regiment, and, in addition, some R.E. and R.A. from Sierra Leone, who, although black, were not Colonial troops, but under the the War Office. The Navy was very busy all this time, patrol boats dashing all over the place. The Germans had sunk a number of ships to cover up the only fairway over the bar, and we could see the masts of the sunken ships sticking out. They had patrols and posts all along the shore. One reconnaissance at a likely landing-place did not prove a great success; the landing was among mangroves, and did not offer many prospects, so it was given up. Shortly afterwards H.M.S. *Challenger* managed to lighten herself sufficiently to get past the wrecks, over the bar, and through a channel which had been discovered.

After a few shots had been fired Duala and Bonaberi on the west bank of the river surrendered. The channel was heavily mined, and in consequence the *Challenger* could not go up until a pilot came off. The Germans made use of this delay, and the subsequent delay before other ships came up and landed troops, in evacuating a very considerable quantity of stores. They also blew up the Wireless Station and the magazine. The Navy had done us a very good turn in thus securing Duala and Bonaberi. The prospect of making a landing in the man-

groves, and then forcing our way through almost unknown jungles, was not at all pleasant, as those who have seen a mangrove swamp will agree.

Our ship was the first to be sent up to Duala, and our men were landed and went off in parties to find out the lie of the land and clear up the situation. Other troops went to Bonaberi and found there quite a small fleet of ships of the Woermann Line. On these were confined nearly all the Allied prisoners who had been living in the S. Cameroons at the outbreak of war. There should be quite a nice little sum of money accruing from these ships for the units of the Royal Navy concerned. It was most thoroughly well earned, for they had had, and continued to have, a very arduous and dangerous time in scouting up and down the fever-haunted creeks.

Duala is a large straggling town with some good stone buildings, among others a very fine hospital and a Police Barracks and a large Government House. The defences were not strong: four old-pattern field guns and some trenches. They had relied on mines more than anything else. A number of Germans lost their lives in handling these mines, but they never did us any damage.

The Germans had not expected Duala to be captured in the manner it was, and left a great quantity of stores behind, including medical stores and some most valuable drugs which would otherwise have been evacuated.

The Duala natives thought that now the English had come they could do as they liked towards the property, &c., of their old masters, and started looting. This had to be stopped and severe measures taken. About fifty who were caught red-handed were flogged one evening. It sounds very brutal, but it was the only thing to be done. To have tried them in front of a judge and then have them put in prison would probably have been of no use; we did not want black prisoners to guard and feed as well as white, and putting them in prison would not have produced an immediate effect on their compatriots. It was efficacious, too; looting stopped suddenly.

After a few days spent in consolidating our position active operations were undertaken. Our Allies, the French, pushed out to the east along the Midland Railway and captured the big railway bridge at Japema by a fine feat of arms. Some of the English troops pushed up along the Northern Railway from Bonaberi; others proceeded up-stream in tugs and motor-boats and attacked Jabassi. The first attack was unsuccessful—guides were neither plentiful nor good, the country was very difficult, and the troops were ambushed. A few days afterwards another attempt was made with different troops and proved successful, with hardly any loss. One contretemps, which might have been very serious, happily occasioned no casualties. A body of our troops on one side

of the river was mistaken for the enemy and fired at by our own men on the other bank; and to add to their troubles, the naval 12-pounder fired at them too. This put a sudden stop to the proceedings, as if a man, seeing two dogs fighting, had kicked one and stopped the fight.

The Navy put two 6-inch guns on to lighters, and these were brought up the river and used. They made a great noise and produced a great effect on our men. There was a very persistent rumour that a 6-inch shell had pitched right on top of a German launch crossing the river full of soldiers, had sunk it, and killed every one on board.

After a few days our battalion was left to garrison Jabassi, while the rest of the expedition withdrew. Jabassi is not a pleasant place. Standing on both banks of the river, it is closely surrounded by tropical forest. The weather was very hot, with tremendous bursts of rain. There were Germans all round in the bush, and they came and sniped us occasionally. Once they tried to rush our post on the left bank of the river in the twilight, but did not get very far, as we had some rather stout defences. It was pretty hot while it lasted, although casualties on both sides were small. After three or four weeks we were sent out on a long reconnaissance and then withdrawn, and I do not think any of us want to see Jabassi again.

All this time steady progress was being made. A column of

British troops was proceeding up the Northern Railway; the French, helped by our Navy and British troops, had taken Edea, an important town on the Midland Railway fifty-six miles east of Duala; and French troops coming in from the French Congo had inflicted a heavy defeat on the Huns at Nola.

After our withdrawal from Jabassi we formed part of a force which, by combined operations, captured Buea, the Simla of the Cameroons. Buea stands about 3000 feet high, on the slopes of the Cameroon Mountain, which towers up to 13,000 feet behind it. The country at the foot of the mountain is the most fertile in the whole of the Cameroons—plantations of cocoa, banana, and pine-apple. The bananas and pine-apples were much appreciated by every one. There are a number of extensive plantations along the lower slopes of the Cameroon Mountain. A model one, with a palatial house, we discovered, belonged to a German millionaire, a friend of the Kaiser, who had urged him to take part in the development of the Cameroons.

At Buea, as at Duala, we found a large number of non-combatants—men, women, and children. The Germans had no scruples about getting rid of their *bouches inutiles*, and the way in which they left their women everywhere to await our arrival says a good deal for the confidence they had in our character. The Germans at Buea believed im-

plicitly that the war would be over very shortly, that a large portion of the British fleet was sunk, and that a mutiny had broken out in India. In my halting German I did my best to disillusion some of them, but they were hard to convince.

It was quite cold at Buea. Potatoes and vegetables are grown there—even strawberries and roses. Prussian cattle had been imported, and a dairy established. We thoroughly enjoyed our stay, with the good food and fresh meat, and were quite sorry to leave.

The district around Buea was hardly affected by the war. The Germans had not burnt any villages, or shot or hanged any of the natives, as had been their amiable custom round Jabassi and Duala.

We had one scrap on our way up. The Germans had quite a good position, with deep trenches, but did not put up a very good fight. A great deal of shooting on both sides, and not many casualties. It was a curious thing, but we noticed throughout the campaign that the Germans generally put up their best fights either in hastily improvised entrenchments or else when they had no entrenchments at all. We came across a number of admirably fortified positions: generally the Germans evacuated them, or were pushed out without much loss.

After a stay of ten days at Buea, during which a considerable amount of patrolling in the surrounding country

was done, many Germans were rounded up, and the neighbourhood thoroughly pacified, our battalion left Buea *en route* for Majuka, a station on the Northern Railway, where the main British force was concentrating. We made a cross-country march over execrable paths. Intelligence was vague, and the guides were bad, and water was either far away or else present in too great quantities to be pleasant. We took four and a half days over what was meant to be a three days' march.

There was a great reunion at Majuka—where we joined up with the rest of the force. The day after arrival we started off on our advance North. Co-operating with us was a force of Nigerian troops, based on Ikom, inside the South Nigerian border, about 150 miles N.W. of us. The difficulty of ensuring co-operation between the various columns proved very great throughout the campaign. We were not equipped with wireless, and later on, when wireless arrived, the atmospheric conditions in the forest country reduced its radius by nearly half. Helio-graph and flag signalling were no use in the forest country, as there was no view, and telephone and telegraph wires were often broken by elephants and other stray animals who perhaps liked to scratch their backs on them; occasionally they were cut by Germans. The most certain way was to get a message back by convoy or runner to the advanced

telegraph post, and so round to G.H.Q. in Duala. It must be remembered that our forces were ludicrously small compared with the size of the country—probably at the highest 18,000 French, British, and Belgian troops operating in a country bigger than Germany. Against us were probably 5000 to 8000, with almost as many Europeans as the total Allied forces had—and the number of Europeans with African troops makes a great difference. The enemy were well supplied with machine-guns, the majority of them of a much more modern type than most of ours. In the bush machine-guns are far more valuable to the defence than guns are to the attackers. The aim of the enemy was generally to draw us into an ambush and then punish us as severely as possible, not to put up a stand-up fight. The field of fire is very limited in the bush—a few hundred yards at most; and our guns hardly ever found anything definite to fire at. When the artillery did find a target they put in most excellent work, and the native gunners and gun-carriers always worthily upheld the traditions of the Royal Regiment. When we left the railways all our transport was carrier transport: guns, ammunition, supplies, sick and wounded—everything on top of the carriers' heads. On two of the roads, after the first eight months of the campaign, we were able to use a certain number of motors; but directly the main road was left it was carrier

transport again. Horse transport in the jungle country was precluded by the tsetse-fly, and there were numerous tsetse-belts in the more open country. Our northern forces and the French forces could make use of nothing but carrier transport from their bases, which were probably on a river. Imagine the transport of sick and wounded 300 to 500 miles on stretchers! In addition, the enemy possessed the advantages of interior lines and unity of command. There was a good telegraph system throughout the interior of the Cameroons, and some of the roads were surprisingly good for West Africa. Thus it will be seen that the Germans had much in their favour. We and our Allies were nearly always attacking, and when in action could hardly ever find room to make full use of our superiority of numbers. It is not easy to deploy in tropical jungle, and turning movements take time, as they generally have to be made by forcing and cutting a way through the bush or else down a narrow winding path, the whole width of which one man with a rifle can comfortably look after.

To resume the story of our advance. For the first couple of days we met with no opposition; for the next six a certain amount of scrapping every day. The enemy apparently were not in great force, and were rather frightened of our flanking column. They gave our leading company rather a hot time at Nlohe Bridge, which they had blown up, and which

was skilfully and rapidly repaired by the Sierra Leone R.E. and Nigerian Railway Engineers, but we reached N'kongsamba, the railhead, without much incident. N'kongsamba stands about 3000 feet, and is a collection of tin houses, just like any other temporary railhead. We were now getting into the mountains.

One day's bush fighting is much like another. Dawn is between 5.30 and 6, and the advance-guard generally moved out about 6 A.M. Ignorance of the ground and lack of efficient guides generally precluded night operations. Most of us had a hasty meal before moving out. My first skipper was an old Coaster, and could not bear the sight of food at such an early hour; I, on the contrary, recently out from England, had a healthy appetite, so used to consume cold porridge (made overnight), tea, jam, and biscuits, while he went as far away as he could and did his best to restrain his feelings.

First the advance-guard winds out: the point—a few soldiers with a European near by, and probably a section close to him. This is the "bait," so that a large force shall not run into an ambush. As can be imagined, it is a nervous job, generally much worse before the firing commences. After the action has started it is not so jumpy. Behind the point comes the remainder of the vanguard, followed at due interval by the main-guard, which probably has artillery and engineers

with it. The guns take to pieces, and are carried on stretchers, four men to a stretcher.

After the advance-guard has cleared sufficient ground for the main body, the latter moves out—a long, winding snake; first the fighting troops, then the carriers—a motley crowd in every stage of dress or undress, carrying everything, ammunition, supplies, medical stores, baggage, and sick, on their heads. Last of all comes a rearguard.

After a little time shots are heard, and the main column is brought to a halt while the advance-guard proceeds to clear up the situation. It may be only a few men whom the point can dislodge; it may necessitate the artillery coming into action and turning movements being made.

So the day goes on.

A halt has to be made in the afternoon for making camp, as there is very little twilight and sunset is early.

After a site for camp has been chosen and covering troops pushed out, the baggage, &c., is parked, soldiers and carriers take out their machetes (a heavy, outlass-shaped knife), and proceed to cut down the undergrowth or elephant-grass to clear a sufficient space.

Then rough trenches are dug, fires lit and food cooked, the advance-guard withdrawn or relieved, sentries, &c., posted, and the camp settles down.

Such is a typical day. Of course there are many days when things do not end up so

comfortably, and everything is much more strenuous.

We halted some days at N'kongsamba to make a base, with an advanced base 14 miles farther on. We were a mixed force from all the West African Colonies—a naval 12-pdr. from H.M.S. *Challenger*, Northern Nigeria Battery, Sierra Leone Engineers, Nigerian Telegraph and Railway men, Northern and Southern Nigerian Infantry, and Gold Coast Pioneers; an army of carriers; and a couple of mule-waggons, which performed some highly adventurous journeys, driven by a couple of real old swash-bucklers who had fought and roughed it over half Africa.

From the size of our force every one knew every one else, and we were a very intimate little body.

We left our advanced base on Christmas Eve, and had a peaceful Christmas on the march. Before starting on the 27th we received the King's Christmas message, and the advanced troops had some stiff fighting that day in crossing a river and in some marshy ground beyond. Thanks to the quality of the German musketry, our losses were small. We could hear the Southern Nigerian troops some few miles on our left flank having a stiff time of it. In three or four more days we ascended another 1000 feet after some opposition, and reached the open country. The hills were from 4000 to 8000 feet, the sides either cultivated or covered with

long elephant-grass, the road winding along the valley. This necessitated picketing heights, which was slow work. On January 2nd we reached Dschang. After firing a few shots the Germans fled, and those left behind surrendered the fort. The fort was a fine big stone building, and there were stone houses for the officers, Government officials, and a Roman Catholic Mission. The Germans had burnt the Hausa town, driven away all the inhabitants, and evacuated all their supplies.

Dschang is a lovely spot,—hot, but with a dry heat in the day and very cold at night; good cold water, plenty of goats and cattle in the neighbourhood, fields of potatoes,—in fact, quite a white man's country. The hill pagans around Dschang were quite a different type to any natives we had yet seen: fine, big, upstanding men, half naked, with grotesque tattooing over chest and stomach, they grinned cheerfully, and put out their hands to shake hands. They did not appear to be a bit afraid of the Germans. It was a double relief to meet them after the cringing, frightened natives of the low country, and to get into the open after the eternal oppressive jungle.

After some days of reconnaissance and patrols around Dschang, as the enemy apparently did not mean to fight a pitched engagement, and we could hear no news of the troops coming from

the Nigerian border, the fort was burnt, and the column returned to railhead and Bare, the residence of the district commissioner, six miles north of railhead. We saw no sign of the enemy during our retirement. Their scouts came in touch with our advanced post two days later, and then they gradually came down in ever-increasing numbers. We found out afterwards that our withdrawal from Dschang had so surprised them, they came to the conclusion the German fleet was out and we were leaving the country. They accordingly collected all available forces to speed us on our way! Just before this they had made a big attack on our French allies at Edea, but were heavily repulsed, losing a quarter of the attacking force, and inflicting very small losses on the defenders.

For two months from the middle of January there was considerable activity all around the railhead of the Northern Railway and Bare. The enemy attacked Bare one day, but were beaten off, and then contented themselves with sniping. More troops, who had just arrived in the country, were sent up, with the idea of striking a heavy blow. Our battalion did a night march, hoping to get within striking distance by dawn. The enemy also moved, so both forces surprised each other, and we had a good stand-up scrap for about two and a half hours. We were on the lower ground,

the enemy on the higher. Their machine-guns did considerable execution, but our men stuck it wonderfully, and our guns put in such good work that by dawn the enemy had no stomach left for further fighting and fled. We captured the whole of his camp and some ammunition, stores, and cattle. Another British force, meant to co-operate, was not quite so successful, however, so the day ended in a draw. Soon after this our battalion was withdrawn for a rest. There was another month of fighting, by the end of which the Germans apparently had enough of it, and were convinced that we did not mean to leave the country.

During this time our French and Belgian allies made considerable progress from the Belgian Congo, and reconquered the greater part of the country ceded to Germany by France in 1911 in exchange for the Morocco concession. The allied forces in the North were engaged in confining the Germans in their strongholds at Mora and Garua. This ended the first phase of the campaign.

The War Office now took over the conduct of the campaign, and new officers began to be sent out. They were most welcome, as, although the casualties had not been severe, in comparison with Europe, the climate was taking a heavy toll, and there had been no one to fill up the gaps. The conditions of Government service in West Africa are one year out and then two months

in England, and if the person concerned is returning to the coast, a further two months' leave. Those who have done considerably over their time begin to feel the effects of the climate more and more as time goes on. We also received much needed drafts of recruits for the troops and for the carriers. There had been a considerable amount of sickness among the men, apart from casualties. Those who came from the northern districts felt the climate and altered conditions. The "jigger," a flea which burrows under the skin and then lays its eggs, laid up a number of the barefooted troops. The black man is fairly callous; he would often extract the jigger with a blunt knife and leave a raw place which speedily turned into a sore. The natives of jigger-infested countries are very clever at extracting them, and can do so, even from under a nail, almost painlessly. Many Europeans also suffered from jigger.

The opening of the German submarine campaign was brought forcibly to our notice by the torpedoing of the *Falaba*, one of the West African mail-boats. Most of us knew some one on board her, and many, alas, were drowned.

The second phase of the campaign opened about the middle of April, when a Franco-British advance started from Edea towards Jaunde, the seat of the German Government, about 110 miles away. The French forces from the Congo were co-operating from their

side. It was almost impossible to receive accurate news of their movements, as they were operating some weeks' journey away from their nearest telegraph post. The Franco-British advance was attended with great success for the first month. The British advanced along the Jaunde road and captured the German positions over the Ngwe and Mbila rivers after stubborn fighting. The French, moving along the railway, met with fierce opposition, and carried strong hostile positions over the Kele river and at Sende. Finally, the British sent down a contingent towards Eseka, the temporary railhead, which arrived just about the time the French took it. It was after this that all the Allied troubles began. The French left the railway and joined up with the British on the road. From now onward practically every turn in the road was stubbornly contested, and the hardest fighting in the whole campaign took place. The French advancing from the Congo had been held up, and the enemy were enabled to concentrate troops from all over the country. After three weeks' incessant fighting, during which only ten miles' progress had been made, and some fifty or more remained to be covered, it was decided to abandon the advance and retire to a suitable line of defence.

Owing to the French from the Congo being unable to advance, and the advent of

the rains, which militate very greatly against active operations, a further advance did not offer much chance of success. Casualties of Europeans and men had been heavy; also dysentery had set in, and many were sick from it and other causes. The lines of communication were becoming long and vulnerable, and one convoy had already been captured by the enemy. A few days before the withdrawal commenced, the welcome news arrived that Garua had capitulated to the Anglo-French force besieging it. Four guns, 10 machine-guns, a quantity of ammunition, 37 Europeans and about 200 native troops, with large quantities of ammunition, were captured; and in addition, many of the enemy were drowned or killed whilst attempting to escape. A French 95 mm. gun and a British naval 12-pdr., which had been brought up with great difficulty, produced a great effect on the native garrison. Garua was found to be thoroughly well defended: an assault with the artillery at our disposal would not have had much prospect of success. The results of the German concentration against the Franco-British column advancing upon Jaunde were soon apparent, as the troops released from Garua were able to sweep down to N'gaundere, some 150 to 200 miles, without much opposition, and the French Congo troops were also able to make further progress.

After some fighting on the

line to which the Franco-British troops had withdrawn, things quietened down during the rains until the middle of October. There was one expedition along the frontier between the Cameroons and Spanish Guinea, but this was held up and could not make much progress. The time was occupied in getting everything ready for the last phase, a simultaneous offensive by all the Allied columns, which it was hoped would finish the campaign. Men and officers were rested, and the men from Nigeria and the Gold Coast, who had been in the Cameroons since the beginning, were sent back to their colonies for a short spell, which they thoroughly enjoyed. They all had money saved up, and were made much of on their return. They were delighted to see their families and their own country again, and to eat their own particular delicacies, which they did to their heart's content, filling their stomachs as tight as they could. The readiness of the men and carriers to return was a great credit to their moral. Many officers who were feeling the effects of too much Africa also were sent home to England for a few weeks. Among new arrivals was a company of Light Mechanical Transport, which did excellent work, "Henry the How," a 4.5 howitzer, and Charlie Chaplin, the armoured car. These last were not very successful: Henry wanted 100 men to pull him, another 100 to carry ammunition, and could not be moved into the jungle; Charlie

generally wanted road repairs done before he could proceed far. The 5th Light Infantry, Indian Army, were brought round. Some of the West Indian Regiment also arrived.

October saw the beginning of the end. British troops, Nigerian, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambian, and West Indian, again advanced and captured the Mbila position after a stiff fight, and the French soon afterwards recaptured Eseka, while troops from the S. Nigeria border captured Bamenda. Another British column, composed of detachments of the 5th Light Infantry, Indian Army, and West African Regiment, had advanced from the railhead of the Northern Railway, captured Dschang after some opposition, and subsequently co-operated with this Nigerian column in clearing up the country. The Congo French also were making steady progress. After forming advanced bases at Mbila and Eseka the advance was again continued towards Jaunde, and a very strong German position over the Puge river captured by a brilliant turning movement, after some stiff fighting, more especially on the part of the flanking troops. A Northern column had a stubborn engagement at Banjo Mt., and heavily defeated the enemy. In such manner the advance to Jaunde was continued, the flanking columns generally having the heaviest fighting, until Jaunde was entered by the British column from Edea on New Year's Day 1916. Our allies the French

had been advancing parallel to us, but some way to the south, and had had some stiff fighting. It had been evident for some time that we and the French only had rearguards against us; and it appeared probable that the enemy were trying to secure their retreat into Spanish Guinea. The two columns which were endeavouring to close this frontier had heavy fighting, and could only make slow progress. Jaunde proved the key of the position. When the British entered the Northern columns were some 40 miles to the north and the Congo French some 60 miles to the east. These columns gradually closed on Jaunde, relieving the British troops there, who took up the pursuit of the enemy. The entry of the French G.O.C. Congo troops into Jaunde through the British outposts was rather an impressive sight. He came in with one company ahead of the rest, marching about 60 miles in three days. He halted just before the outpost, formed up, placed his trumpeters in front, and marched in, the trumpets blowing a fanfare with all the traditional French *élan*. This force had marched and fought some 600 miles across tropical Africa, from the river Congo, traversing some of the least-known portions of the whole continent. With them were some of our Belgian allies from the Belgian Congo. The difficulties this Franco-Belgian force had to surmount were innumerable: difficulties of transport for ammunition, food, and casualties,

great distances to be traversed, frequently a lack of water with a fierce sun overhead, to say nothing of strong positions to be carried and constant and heavy fighting.

Little more remains to be told. The Germans gradually retired towards Spanish Guinea, fighting some skilful rearguard actions and keeping open their line of retreat until the main body had crossed the frontier, and interned themselves after burning everything they could not take with them.

With the surrender of Mora in the extreme north of the Cameroons, the campaign came to a close in the middle of February.

The native troops of ourselves and our Allies are deserving of the greatest credit for the way they fought all through this campaign. The rights and wrongs of the war were unknown to them. They only knew that their officers wanted them to fight against other white men and their black men, a form of warfare which they had never expected when they enlisted. They were taken into a strange country away from their belongings—a country which many of them hated worse than the Englishman hates West Africa—and, perhaps worst of all, their rations were very scanty. Through transport difficulties when on the march it was hardly ever possible to give them a good bellyful, and the African dearly loves his tummy. The Hun often took good care to devastate the

country before us. Through all this they stuck to us, and hardly ever grumbled, and in action surpassed previous expectations formed of them.

How they would do in Europe is another question. It is doubtful if they would stand the climate. (The French Senegalese are generally harder men than our West African troops.) They would require a very lengthy period of training, and most of them are inclined to be stupid—they could probably only be used as infantry, and would require a great number of Europeans with them.

Let those who talk airily about "Our Million African Army" think of some of these difficulties, and remember, in addition, that our numbers of troops out there are ridiculously small. You cannot raise 1,000,000 without some cadres to start with. After all, we had some 500,000

Regulars, Reservists, and Territorials before the war, and consider the time and trouble it has taken to multiply these numbers some few times. It would be hard also to produce some 30,000 instructors competent to instruct and train the black man, having first picked up a smattering of his language. There might also be considerable difficulty in procuring 1,000,000 fit and able-bodied black men from our colonies. The native ages very quickly, and an extraordinarily high percentage are diseased in some way or another. The impression that every African is a born fighting man is quite erroneous. In addition, many who have in the past fought well against us have been temporarily fortified by the courage of ignorance or by fanaticism: neither of these will stand the strain of European warfare for long.

W.A.F.F.

THE TALE OF A CASUALTY CLEARING STATION.

BY A ROYAL FIELD LEECH.

CHAPTER VI.—THE GRANARY AT FERE-EN-TARDENOIS.

It was nearly dark as we rumbled through Chateau Thierry. The streets were almost deserted. Here and there the splash of bullets had left mementos upon the sides of the houses. It was evident that little time had elapsed since the enemy had retreated that way. We had, however, no time to pry into details.

The driver's knowledge of the road was doubtful. The camp fires of troops in bivouac, however, pointed the way to us. The Headquarters of our army was at the little town of Fere-en-Tardenois, and it was the business of regiments to know where that place was. Hence we easily obtained news.

The night was pitchy dark when we arrived. The square of the town was packed with men, horses, carts, and lorries. To find the office of the medical staff was no easy matter. In due course Master managed to report our arrival, and received orders to take over a deserted granary with the adjacent house on the outskirts of the town.

A Field Ambulance had temporarily taken charge. The granary and a goods-shed, three hundred yards away, at the railway station, were already half filled with wounded. As, however, no more were expected that night we were given time to breathe.

To swarm over the house and granary, to discover the extent of our location, was the work of but a few minutes. The building was fortunate in possessing electric light fittings, and the R.E., with a portable electric light lorry, had already provided the power. The owner's house was a comfortable little two-storied building. Beds, household crockery, kitchen utensils, and a room replete with linen still remained intact.

A door from the house led to the office of the granary. The office safe, the door of which had evidently been forcibly opened by a revolver shot, stood empty and derelict in a corner. A notice posted on its top stated that it would be waste of time opening the safe, as it contained nothing of value. Can one quite blame those Germans who had sought to verify such a naïve statement?

The kitchen of the house was such as our cook had not entered since arriving in France. The garden behind provided ample room for the men's kitchens. A commodious stable made a first-rate quartermaster's stores. Our sanitary squad was soon at work marking out ground and posting notices.

The main building of the granary was three-storied.

The two upper flats were still buried in loose grain, and a narrow winding staircase was the only means of getting up. It was obvious at sight that lying-down cases could not be carried upstairs.

We were, however, not given too much time for consideration. Work began with the new day in grim earnest. Our staff was also further depleted by the Boy, who was suddenly ordered off with some men to help another unit overburdened with wounded at Chateau Rosières, some miles away.

With the evening and the usual return of supply lorries to the railway for food came wounded. Twenty-five lorry loads was one item. The slight cases were despatched to the loft. With blankets and mackintosh sheets spread upon the loose grain, these professed perfect content. The middle loft, swept and garnished, accommodated those requiring more careful attention. The ground floor was reserved for purely stretcher cases. The little office was the operating theatre.

The scene during the first few days was not easily forgotten. Florrs operated; Master gave chloroform and orders at the same time; Mackenzie fed those who could swallow. Fortunately the absent officers were destined to return soon. In the meanwhile there was little rest. Convoys from the Aisne trenches arrived steadily. British, French, and Germans came together. We took all.

Then came the fear of tetanus. The wounded, their clothes impregnated with the

mud of the trenches, dug in highly cultivated and manured ground, were running dreadful risks. Fortunately there is an anti-tetanic serum most valuable as a prophylactic. We did not procrastinate. A large supply was forthcoming very quickly, and every man was henceforth inoculated. It increased the work, but the result was well worth it.

Wounded and sick officers found places in the bedrooms and the dining-room of the house. The latter sported an enormous and pretentious chandelier which illumined the place like a theatre. Why the Huns had not destroyed it out of pure wantonness nobody can guess. After a few days this house was too small. Another house, a hundred yards away, had to be commandeered and fitted with beds and mattresses bought from the townspeople.

Cases of shock began to present themselves. An officer, quivering, lay on his face and groaned at the memory of the awful shelling he had gone through. It was not fear which obsessed him. His nerves simply refused to serve him further. He was but the forerunner of many others. Some were stained saffron-colour from melinite fumes. One man was absolutely dumb. Others riddled with odd scraps of iron, stone, and wood splinters were in a worse way. The high-explosive shells spread devastation for a radius of a couple of hundred yards, and men had to be dug out of the *débris* in which they were buried.

The little operating theatre at Fere-en-Tardenois witnessed many strange and gruesome spectacles. It was a humble room for the purpose, but effective. For sterilisation reasons it was necessary to keep the door shut. That is why we shall never forget that September 1914 was a warm month. That point, however, mattered not at all; the patient was unconscious, and the operators had no time for consideration of minor troubles.

A couple of German army surgeons appeared with a host of other wounded prisoners. Master did not hesitate to use them. The surgeons soon had their coats off and started in to earn their keep by attending their own people. The amputation of a foot became necessary. They were ordered to perform the operation. No doubt the German army possesses good as well as bad operators. We were not fortunate in our selection. The result of the efforts of these two worthies was to leave the amputating knives so hacked, that they have since remained as curiosities. Like all of the race, however, they possessed no mean degree of merit as performers with the knife and fork at meal-times.

Ambulance trains soon managed to get through to Fere-en-Tardenois, and relieved us of those wounded fit to travel. The curé's little cemetery near the church provides the resting-place of others. Nevertheless, each night the long string of lorries, filled with straw and their groaning

freight, never ceased to cross the railway bridge and halt at the sign of the Red Cross flag. We could not miss anything. Being situated at the extreme edge of the town, every convoy must of necessity pass the doors of the hospital. They seldom arrived until after dark. First would come a load of, perhaps, 150. The orderlies, alert with stretchers and lantern, unloaded those who could not walk. If news preceded the arrival of a second convoy, those who could walk were shepherded to the goods-shed at the station. On most of those first nights convoy succeeded convoy through all the early hours of the night—50 in one, 150 in another, 100 in a third—until sometimes we were in despair for room.

Macfadden, the Gael, with a special assortment of R.A.M.C. personnel, was detailed for duty at the goods-shed branch. Clean straw helped matters considerably. The local *Maire* was found to be an excellent fellow. On demand, he could produce a load of straw in really record time. With straw and stretchers, and a surgical dressing-room in the office, the goods-shed provided excellent accommodation for a hundred. An open-air kitchen was easily rigged up, and the trains started from the door.

The importance of feeding has already been mentioned. The officers' servants were daily sent to forage for vegetables. These were captured from private gardens, but paid for. Fresh milk, and even butter, was obtainable in modest quan-

tities. The supply train from Havre brought plenty of champagne and hospital comforts. A generous and most charming American—an ex-Ambassador of the United States to France—motored through frequently from Paris, bringing cigarettes, champagne, and anything we cared to ask for.

There was a small unpatronised estaminet near the station. In a shed behind it were found a couple of dozen casks of *vin rouge*. Somebody, before our arrival, had tried to puncture one with a pickaxe; anybody who wished could draw all he wanted from another with a spigot already in. In the interests of all concerned it was considered advisable to put this matter on a proper footing. A guard of the London Scottish was therefore placed over the casks. Except for hospital use, interference with the wine was forbidden. The owner, shrugging his shoulders, said we could have all we wanted for nothing, or five centimes a litre, whichever we preferred. We chose the latter. It was unusually good wine—the best we had found in our travels. At fivepence a quart, good wine is not expensive! The guard performed their duty so well that the owner was refused access to his own casks. When he wanted wine he had to obtain Master's permission. He protested, but feebly. No doubt he had not yet forgotten German occupation, and cared little for minor matters.

The patients who could eat were given all the stew with

vegetables that they wanted. The rations also included tea, sugar, bread, bacon, cheese, jam, and biscuits. An occasional villager appeared at odd times with a jug of coffee, or a loaf of fresh bread. The French wounded were particularly glad of such local dainties, and a daily issue of cigarettes was consumed with avidity. For those of delicate appetite there was tinned chicken and champagne.

Here and there Thomas Atkins, his head or arm bandaged, and the light of battle still in his eyes, stalked in, carrying a German helmet, battered and bloody. A young officer tried to calm himself as he showed the broken butt of his revolver and a helmet. The revolver had been broken in battering in the face of the late owner of the helmet. Under ordinary circumstances that young officer would probably have been playing tennis on such a September day in some English town. The reality of the scene was at times almost too difficult to believe.

An ordinary-looking French soldier, clad in a kepi, long grey coat, and red breeches, entered. He announced himself as a *ouré*. We had not known that priests also served. The fear of spies was imminent. A hospital filled with men straight from the field notoriously provides excellent information for an enemy on the look-out for it. We did not forget it.

News reached us of the gallantry of our R.A.M.C. officers in the firing line. It

was a stimulating record. One young officer who passed our way related how he had been captured and insulted. The German Staff stood by and laughed while the men stripped him of his rank badges and corps badges as souvenirs. He had explained to no effect that he was an officer. He scored in the end, however, for French troops advancing, he sprang upon a German horse and escaped. The horse was his souvenir!

Stories of French prisoners being pushed in front of the German troops, and the bodies of dead Germans being used by their comrades as protecting ramparts, were of constant occurrence. We came into this war with individual minds free of prejudice, but one incident upon another fanned the flame until now personal hatred was rapidly developing. One cannot shake hands with prisoners who have lost their honour.

The difference between races in the bearing of suffering was most marked. Tommy Atkins accepted his troubles and pains (as he always has done) with either stoical dumbness or a joke. The Frenchman was patient and enduring beyond belief, always pathetically grateful and wonderfully brave. Men who can continue to be gallant within touch of a surgeon's knife are men to be respected. The German, on the other hand, never stood up if he could possibly lie down, whined, or shouted for attention unceasingly as if by

right, and stood pain badly. We surgeons had not expected these traits of national character. Such, however, are the unbiassed facts. The whole attitude of the German wounded is that of intense selfishness, that of British and French notably the reverse. Is that not, perhaps, the national attitude as well?

One day a delicately-built French infantry private, with tears in his eyes, stood in the hall-way of the house. He was the owner of the granary. A few days' leave had been given him in which to see what had happened to his property. Master, filled with sympathy, stammered a few befitting words of French whilst he accompanied him over the premises.

In turn, the exile visited every room, and at the memories recalled by the sight of each burst into open weeping. The household linen, originally tied into neat bundles, his wife's hat and clothes, and a child's clothes, had been thrown about the linen room in wild disorder. The sight of his child's crib and toys was utterly too much for him. A visit to the rifled safe filled the man's cup of bitterness to overflowing. In it, he sobbed, had been left documents worth 10,000 francs to him. It appeared that his wife and child were very delicate, and as his own life in those days of constant battle was not worth twenty-four hours' purchase, it was difficult to find one ray of comfort for him. Through a wounded speaker of the lan-

guage, Master consoled him with what words he could muster, and assured him of the proper care of his remaining property while we occupied the place. In the end he went away looking decidedly more resigned, and offered Master a clock as a token of goodwill. It is probable that the little man's troubles have long ceased to worry him. The French army of the Aisne of September 1914 could not have left many to mourn the loss of the others.

After some days Porteous was joined at Coulommiers by Macfadden with his men, and together they got through our trucks and remaining equipment. The Boy also was retrieved. Things began to shape themselves upon more regular lines. In due course a lull came. Our men setting to work with a will, shovelled the loose grain into bags, and cleaned the granary from floor to ceiling.

The town now began to awaken. Refugees with bag and baggage arrived daily; shops, which had been carefully boarded up, opened their doors and began to do a brisk trade with what was left of their stock. Nearly all these shops showed signs of internal disorder. Goods thrown higgledy-piggledy all over the floors and counters advertised their own tales. Our troops bought freely, but for many days—until, in fact, a few items of new stock could be got through from the nearest big towns—there was little to buy.

The ambulance trains nearly always reached us at night.

The arrival was decidedly welcome, but then came the problem of how best to carry several hundred stretcher cases to the train. An R.A.M.C. orderly's muscles have their limitations. Daylight often appeared before the job was done. And in the meanwhile a fresh convoy of sick and wounded might arrive at any moment. An ambulance train can seldom wait at a station, in anticipation, as other places are of necessity calling for it. Fere-en-Tardenois was by no means the only railhead. A company of London Scottish was found very useful for carrying stretchers to trains, and their services were much appreciated. At last, one day there arrived the first fleet of motor ambulances from England. This proved to be the edge of a splendid wedge, which was destined to relieve for evermore the motor-supply lorries of all their work in connection with the wounded.

After a week another Clearing Hospital arrived on the scene. The new unit seized upon the church. It was a good church, large and airy. With chairs removed and the aisles spread with mattresses, there are worse places than a church for the accommodation of the wounded in summer. The absence of water, kitchen, &c., is a drawback, but by improvisation these defects can be overcome. Wounded officers find seclusion in the chancel; a side chapel does excellently for an operating theatre. For a confessional-box no use whatever can be found!

There came a night dark and drizzly when we were almost at our wits' end. The granary was filled by dark; the church could take no more; the goods-shed was overflowing. Still the convoys continued to arrive from the front. A small dancing-hall in the town was captured. Wires for the nearest ambulance train had no effect. Other railheads were themselves filling up. Still the wounded kept pouring in. Things began to look desperate. Seven hundred already occupied the buildings. There seemed no room for another half-dozen. The breaking-point looked alarmingly near. Then the train came. That night was the biggest we had ever faced, but it was destined to be defeated three times over in the days to come.

The day came when, the tide of war calling away the other units, we were again left alone. Florrs, with a picked detachment, promptly took over the church. It seemed his by right! The curé—a genial soul—requested leave to continue to hold his morning Mass. This was readily granted. With rows of wounded lying on their mattresses and the priest droning out his service at the altar, the place presented a bizarre appearance. The smell of incense competed with that of drugs, and the boom of the cannons in the distance added to one's mental confusion.

After the storm the calm. Master's dairy for September 27th reads: "A beautiful day. Communion Service at 8 A.M. in the granary loft. This is

the 15th day of the battle of the Aisne, which now shows signs of stopping. Only 50 patients in hospital this morning."

Stress of work began to slacken. The signs of an approaching departure had grown familiar to us. Master began to haunt the Staff office in search of information. Florrs and Porteous studied maps. Mackenzie, gathering knowledge from private sources of his own, nodded his head sagely and became secretive. Rheims Cathedral was still being shelled. From hints received, Soissons became the favourite in the betting on the scene of our next venture. That the latter place was still in German hands was nothing. What of that? Had we not crossed the Marne? Why not the Aisne as well?

On the morning of the 6th October, Master was suddenly confronted with an official question from Headquarters.

"How long will it take you to clear out, and how many trucks do you need?"

"One hour, and four trucks," was the reply.

"Well then, here are your orders," said the Staff Officer, delivering the familiar piece of paper.

Ten minutes later Master entered the granary like a bomb.

"Pack up!" he ordered. "We are off by train at once. We report for further orders at Villeneuve."

"Ah!" grunted Mackenzie, hurrying off to his duties. "I heard a rumour that we were

dashing off North again, which I could not believe."

"Ugh!" growled Florrs. "Hope we shan't stop long in that poisonous place. What about Soissons? What do you suppose it all means, Master?"

"Surprise party for Kaiser Bill," assented Porteous.

"Clearing Hospitals don't move North without an army to serve. We are obviously part of a big flank movement. You wait and see."

CHAPTER VII.—A NEW FRONT.

The comfort of cattle trucks as compared with first-class passenger coaches has already been mentioned. With lanterns swinging from the roof, our mess table laden with good rations, a store of *vin rouge* thoughtfully collected from the much-regretted casks we had recently commandeered, and our eight stretchers and bedding ready at a moment's notice, we journeyed forth expectantly through Chateau Thierry *en route* for Villeneuve. The essence of warfare is the faculty of being light-hearted between whiles. We had absorbed that sufficiency of gruesomeness which but enhanced the pleasure of our holiday. The future promised the attractiveness of the unforeseen. What more could we want?

It was daylight when our train pulled up at the great railway junction. As usual, we seemed to be of no interest to anybody. Our engine deserting us, we washed, breakfasted, and began to question. Where was the army we were intended to serve? Nobody quite knew—certainly not in that locality. Could we push on? A sarcastic R.T.O. disclaimed intuitive knowledge.

Stimulated by a night's rest

and an unaccustomed atmosphere where no sound of guns punctuated the whistling of shunting engines, Master girded on his belts and started forth to reconnoitre. The nearest Staff office was some miles away. It was learned that the medical units might appear on the horizon at any hour. "First come first served" applies in the army quite as often as in civil life.

In due course Master returned. Secrecy was the order of the day. We had been promised first turn—time and place still in the clouds. With that we were forced to be content. The fact that our army was marching by road from the Aisne, whilst we had come by train, was at that time unknown to us.

The shops of Villeneuve, poor as they were, were not without attraction to those who had been starved of such things for some weeks. But it was a weary day. Expectancy alone kept hearts beating. We had come for war, not shops.

It was noon next day before our orders arrived, but some hours later before we could get a move on our engine. Our destination was Abbeville.

What that meant we did not know; but if the way the Gael argued in his sleep that night was any guide, we were "for it."

The journey round Paris, through St. Denis, was painfully slow, but with daylight came the beautiful valley of the Somme. Chateaux half concealed upon the wooded heights, here and there a glimpse of village and winding stream, and orchards red with ripened apples, presented a panorama good indeed to look upon.

Our men were awake bright and early. The freemasonry of their class with the French peasants served them, as usual, in obtaining their fill of apples as the train slowed down on up-grades. Our own truck received well-meant showers of fruit which required careful dodging. Ration biscuits in exchange were accepted with genuine delight. We realised that we had again entered the regions of burning "entente." Few British troops had ever passed that way—certainly not since the year of Waterloo.

Porteous, besieged by a bevy of laughing damsels at a wayside station, suddenly dived into his haversack and unearthed a treasured souvenir. Cutting off a small piece of this mascot, he presented it with an expansive gurgle to his most pressing admirer. For a moment of tense interest the group of women examined this special trophy with appraising eyes. Then a yell of delighted laughter

and shouts broke the silence as our train grunted on its way. Had Florrs been the hero of this little act of special gallantry nobody would have wondered. Porteous, inarticulate with the success of his effort, was for the moment unable to explain. Later we discovered that, in his recent wanderings, he had found a strip of be-frilled elastic in a ransacked house and pocketed it. Suddenly imbued with a peculiarly French novelty of an idea, he had tried an experiment. His faith in the perspicuity and appreciation of his audience was not misplaced. Even Florrs had been outdone in initiative. The rest of us viewed the remainder of the dainty thing in conjecture. Porteous said it was garter elastic. We took his word for it!

The engine-driver was peculiarly irritating that morning. Breakfast bacon half-cooked beside the line had to be rescued more than once, and Champion dragged in by his nether garments, ere we fed. The *déjeûner*, however, that we captured at the chief hotel at Abbeville was well worth waiting for.

Having carefully seen to the side-tracking of our trucks and the disconnection of the engine, under personal supervision, we officers repaired to the town.

The men for the time being were content where they were. We had chosen a pretty spot alongside a canal. A soldier who is not keen on fishing is unknown. It is the poacher's

instinct, perhaps, which accounts for this. The sight of a fishing-rod and a Frenchman dangling his legs over the canal lock was enough to fire the men. Where they got the tackle, who can say? But from whence come half the things which Tommy unearthed on service?

French wounded — Tureos, Zouaves, and what not—were passing through Abbeville hourly. A small buffet, worked by French ladies, fed them at the station. British had not come in any numbers yet. What few drifted in were easily accommodated in the local French hospital, a portion of which was allotted to us as a temporary measure.

Luncheon and a report to the Staff over, we again settled our minds, as best we could, to await orders. The Head-quarter Medical Staff, which we had last been in touch with at Fere-en-Tardenois, had arrived by motor-cars before us. All that was medically known we were told. That, however, was little. Our army, advancing somewhere Hazebrouck way, was at present being medically catered for by Field Ambulances. The positions for Clearing Hospitals were as yet not defined. Once again we were faced by the ancient adage—"He also serves," &c.

The little town of Abbeville with its picturesque and historical church, its gay shops and cheery shop-people, has pleasant memories. Master had his hair cut in a real barber's shop. Florrs ab-

sorbed the church and presented us with architectural lessons *en route* to the canal where our trucks lay.

Several attempts had been made during our absence to shunt our train into less picturesque and convenient surroundings. One French shunter after another, with wild toots of his horn, hinted to us that our train was not the only pebble on the beach. We had, however, discovered a rough-and-ready remedy. Master having stated his wish to the men that the couplings were to be always undone as fast as the Frenchmen adjusted them, the rendezvous had been faithfully kept. Chaff and cajoleries supplied the rest, and we were left in peace.

It was a beautiful autumn evening. In later days, amidst the rain and mud and shells of Flanders, we were destined frequently to remember that oasis with longing hearts.

For the time the romance of war had given place to the lighter romance of other things. T. Atkins, basking in the cool of the evening, has a ready way with the other sex, which generally meets with success. But even Tommy in his glory has his side-slips!

Blobbs, the cook, his cap set jauntily over one ear, straightened his back, and watched the approach of a dainty little girl who affected to see nothing of him. That he knew little or nothing of a language never yet deterred a soldier.

Blobbs coughed.

The lady stared straight to her front.

This treatment in France was so unusual that Blobbs scratched his head.

"H'm!" he ventured in halting words. "Voulez-vous permettez moi, M'moiselle, avec vous promenade?"

"Non!" snapped the maiden, tossing her head with decision.

"Pas offence, M'moiselle,—pas offence," breathed Blobbs, mechanically searching for his pipe.

"Oh, ho!" chuckled a friend. "This ain't Portsmouth 'Ard, matey."

"Ho, hindeed!" grunted Blobbs with anger. "If I could sling the bloomin' lingo properly, I'd tork to 'er."

There was apparently no work to be done at Abbeville. A hotel at Boulogne, unoccupied and possibly useful for a permanent hospital, was reported to be available. A party to be despatched in a motor ambulance, for the purpose of claiming the place and preparing it for a Stationary Hospital, was chosen. Another small party took possession of the portion of the local hospital allotted to British. A third location at the railway station was equipped for the purpose of rendering aid to wounded passing through in trains. All these, however, were recognised as nothing more than side-shows. The main objective was still *sub judice*.

The delay, nevertheless, proved to be but a matter of hours. A motor-car having been borrowed, Master started forth across country in search of a plant. St Omer was the selected point. Looking back-

ward it now seems laughable that the question should have arisen as to the safety of the site.

The town was found to be replete with possibilities. It was Sunday. The Maire, in his Sunday best, was easily found. An enormous jute factory, some seventy yards in length and almost empty, close to the station, was offered by the Maire. A Jesuit College, capable of accommodating three hundred patients with a real bed each, was likewise at our disposal. What more could an enthusiastic staff require?

Master returned with joy in his eyes. All that was wanted was the order to be let loose. The Headquarter Staff's hesitation was but momentary. The order came next morning.

Our tentacles at Abbeville and Boulogne had depleted us considerably, but the Aisne detachment, left at Fere-en-Tardenois, miraculously rolled up at the very moment of our departure. The shortness of equipment also gave food for furious thought. On the advance to the Aisne our equipment had, of necessity, been depleted on account of want of transport. To stem the tide of wounded which might be expected to flow towards the large buildings of a city like St Omer, we should require to recover all that we had cast out at Rouen, and more. Mackenzie, however, was not an old campaigner for nothing. With requisition forms in plenty at his command, wherewith to call upon the Ordnance Department, and Master's im-

PLICIT confidence in the readiness of the Paymaster to back all bills presented for local purchases, we made our plans with determination.

Once again our engine shrieked its departure signal. This time there was no surreptitious uncoupling. The men cheered and the officers smiled. The journey through Boulogne and Calais was slow but interesting. The usual ovation *en route* was still as strong as ever. A sight of the sea with the thought of England so close was deliciously stimulating. The weather was perfect.

It was well after dark when we reached St Omer. The Boy, in his capacity of mess caterer, had delayed dinner until our arrival. Thereby he made a mistake. The men, accustomed to every detail of unpacking the trucks, were unusually quick. Still, it was not far off midnight before we found ourselves with legs beneath our table in the wash-house of the jute factory.

The electric light in the place, the expanse of clean cement floor, the glass roof, the lavatories and water-taps, and the many appliances to make work easy which we had never had the luck to find before, awoke us to increased enthusiasm.

"When was our first batch of wounded to be expected?" was the first question on arrival.

"A Field Ambulance marching out this afternoon left sixty for you," came the irresponsible answer.

Fortunately the cases were

slight and had been fed. Nevertheless, it behoved us to get to work. Stretchers were arranged, blankets opened out, floors swept, fires lighted and water boiled, and medical equipment deposited in the factory office. The latter, a glassed, reserved corner of the great building, provided an excellent operating theatre.

Mackenzie made a desperate effort to hold on to our trucks. All tricks and cajoleries, however, proved valueless. Every atom of kit and equipment had to be disgorged. Even then how meagre it looked for the work we knew was in front of us. We had left England with 25 tons; it now stood at barely 15. That we had said "Good-bye" that night for ever to our home in the train we were happily unaware. It was so, nevertheless. A crisis had come in our career. No longer were we to form part of a rapid advance, with the daily excitement of new scenes of labour before us. We were destined from the moment of arrival at St Omer to become civilised. Ignorance, however, is bliss. Civilisation means tape—crimson and knotty.

The Boy's attempt to arrange a meal at a local café failed signally. The Headquarters of an Army Corps had just left. Every ounce of food was stated to have been eaten up much earlier in the day. Champion remained our only stay. It was fortunately not in Champion's nature to fail. While we worked he hustled the cook. That night we slept contentedly on our stretchers in the

wash-house, but it was not as starving or thirsty men.

Straw beneath stretchers was found a welcome adjunct. Recent nights in the train had become increasingly cold. The necessity for as much blanketing beneath as above one is not recognised until experience teaches.

We had lived some five days on end in trucks. The joy, therefore, of a free splash in buckets of water next morning may be imagined. Orders to take over the Jesuit College came with breakfast. General Headquarters had once again followed on our tracks. We were meant to hold the factory still for slight cases ("sitters"), but equip the College for the others ("liers").

Master summed up his resources, wired to tentacles to return as soon as they could, sent Mackenzie to interview the Railhead Ordnance Representative, and started forth to take over the Jesuit College. The whole of the personnel had overnight been intended for the factory. It was now handed over to the care of one officer and a handful of men.

A French temporary mili-

tary hospital had ensconced itself in the building. Its personnel were under orders to evacuate by 9 A.M. At noon they were quietly sitting down to *déjeuner*. Master spoke words! Urgency did not form part of their vocabulary. It may be mentioned in their defence that they were not regular soldiers.

They were given an hour. Meanwhile the building was exploited. It was a huge three-storied edifice, one side on a cobbled street and the other looking out upon a large enclosure garnished by trees. A ruined chapel, cold and dank, seemed useless except for stores, and one wing was in hopeless disrepair and decay. There was, however, an enormous kitchen, good offices, a splendid room for an operating theatre, a small mess-room, and three enormous dormitories, already equipped with fifty bedsteads each.

A picture of the little granary at Fere-en-Tardenois instinctively rose up before our mental vision. What a contrast! We had imagined ourselves a field unit. What was this?

CHAPTER VIII.—ST OMER.

The equipping of a 300-bedded hospital in a more or less derelict building affords scope for work and initiative. T. Atkins, R.A.M.C., is seldom deficient of the latter commodity.

Given a loose rein, a capable N.C.O. and the handful of

men detailed for his special job will perform interesting feats. There is the kitchen staff, for instance, under the sergeant-cook. Leave him alone for an hour, and everything in that building pertaining to cookery will be commandeered at sight. The

operating theatre staff, replete with ideas as to how a theatre should appear, will instinctively seize upon the best room and be all over it before a less worthy gang loom in sight. Improvisations may be good, but fixtures are generally better. Heat, light, and a water supply are essentials for an operating room. But other people like these things also. It is here that Master, with a piece of chalk wherewith to mark doors, is required as an adjudicator.

The Quartermaster must have a commodious quarter for his innumerable stores, perishable and otherwise. The Sergeant-Clerk and his satellites crave an office. Champion, his soul imbued with but one idea, steals the best room for an officers' mess, only to be thrown out ignominiously in due course.

The Sergeant-Major must needs be everywhere at once.

Meanwhile notice came that the arrival of a train-load of wounded from the fighting line might be expected at any hour. Each department of the show is competing with the other. Master urges. MacKenzie is there to provide essentials. Florrs, assisted by the Boy, equips the surgical wards, and keeps a fatherly eye upon the operating theatre. Porteous, with his little retinue, brings his mind and muscles to bear upon the medical side of the building. The Gael, whose strength lies in initiative, is let loose amidst the cobwebby and outlying portions of the building. The

Sergeant-Major chivies laggards and wonders where the night-duty party is to come from.

A wire arrives that a large number of wounded require help at Hazebrouck. A party must be detailed at once. The usual officer, ten men, and equipment must be spared from somewhere. It is the game of ten little niggers over again. Tentacle at Abbeville is still absent; Boulogne tentacle is still *en route*; the Jute Factory tentacle holds that building with already a hundred or so "sitters" to feed and tend. There was no hardship in the case. We had expected this, and we were getting it.

The days of the carriage of wounded in the supply lorries had gone for ever. The long convoy of motor ambulances which filed into the courtyard at midnight presented a wonderfully different scene to the straw-laden lorries of the Aisne.

Everything so far had been simple. The men had, however, still to learn that there were such things as stairs. To side-track light sitting cases to the Jute Factory was an easy task; to carry a convoy of seriously wounded up two or three flights of winding stairs was quite another matter. The men needed little driving, but even willing muscle has its limitations. One hundred bedridden men, requiring careful handling on stretchers, will need a couple of hours to settle in an upper storey.

But one hundred was by no means the limit!

Amongst the early batches of wounded that daily arrived during those first days were many Germans. It became notorious, later, that nearly all badly wounded Huns suffered from compound fracture of the thigh. The reason probably lay in the fact that the enemy was unable to get them off the field.

The deficiency of wounded German officers was noteworthy. One can imagine that officers come first at all times in the German army!

There was one, a Uhlan officer, who was interesting. It was necessary for the Boy to amputate the customary fractured thigh. The patient spoke perfect English, wore glasses, and resembled the fierce Uhlan of history as little as a stork does an ostrich. He explained that he was a law student at the Middle Temple, and would be all right in England! A very celebrated general was passing through the ward. The Uhlan expressed a wish to speak to him.

"Well?" inquired the General quietly.

"I wish to thank you for the kind treatment I have received here," said the German.

"We always treat our prisoners properly," came the dignified answer, as the G.O.C. turned on his heel.

The days that followed that first rush into St Omer proved to be but constant repetition. The arrival of large convoys at night, operations and dressing

of wounds all day, and evacuations by ambulance trains at all hours, gave the staff little rest. Stores began to arrive. The local shops were good, but soon became exhausted of most things other than food. We did not require food, as supplies were excellent. A small bottle of champagne to a benumbed and hopeless man can work wonders. We did not aim at fallals in a Clearing Hospital, but essentials turned up one by one. An Army Base suddenly changed from Havre to Boulogne cannot fly!

Then, one red-letter day, there arrived a motor caravan. It pushed its way into the compound, said it had cost some thousands of pounds, and had come to stay. Out of it stepped an officer who in London, in an extraordinary short time, had rigged up the caravan into a mobile laboratory and brought it out. The inside of this *multum-in-parvo* thing on wheels was equipped with everything that the heart of a bacteriologist could require. Nothing of the kind had ever been seen before in warfare, or anywhere else.

The wizard of the cave having announced his intention of assisting us in any manner he could, we started him upon the good work at once. An up-to-date bacteriologist was exactly what we needed at the moment. Trenches dug in highly cultivated ground had already shown their acutely dangerous character. The wounded, muddy from head to foot,—face, hair, everywhere,—could not escape infected

wounds. A peculiar form of gangrene, unknown to us before, had begun to show itself on the Aisne. For tetanus (also due to manured earth) we had been on the constant watch. Every wounded man was being inoculated against the latter, by order. Of the former, however, we knew nothing. The work of research lay at our visitor's feet in an alarming quantity. He needed no urging. To see his lengthy person dodging into his caravan with "something" under his arm rescued from the operating theatre might be an amusing sight, but it was far from trivial, and occasionally produced far-reaching results.

To the inexperienced, the physical condition of the soldier carried direct from the battlefield to the Dressing Station, and thence lodged in the Clearing Hospital, is unbelievable. Grimed with mud, unwashed for weeks, his clothes infested with vermin, and his boots glued to his feet, he is still a hero. With set teeth and fingers gripping to the sides of his stretcher, he faces the tortures of wound-probing and fracture-setting with the pluck that can only come of heredity. Few fail. There was one such a failure, however, which but served as a text for an example to others.

Private William Perkins, racked by the previous throbbing pain of four-and-twenty hours, cried aloud in agony when the rawness of the wound was explored by the Boy. In the end, however, despite his cries, the dressing

was finished. Then from stretchers in every corner of the room arose the voices of indignant critics. Why had he shouted? Nobody else shouted! The wretched patient pleaded the excess of pain as his excuse. Brother Atkins, having himself suffered likewise with stoic strength, unanimously refused to accept the apology. Poor Perkins was voted a disgrace to his cloth. His accusers, bandaged and wound-worn, fortunately grunted themselves at length into silence.

On one cold bleak day came Johnny Gurkha. He was very young and fragile in appearance. A shell had scored a shocking wound in the region of his hip, and his toes were frost-bitten. There were Germans in the far end of the same room, and English wounded lay between. Fortunately, one of the R.A.M.C. men had been born in India and could speak Hindustani. Also, a Brahman attendant was procurable. Sometimes Johnny would cry to go home to his mother; sometimes he would lose his temper and threaten all sorts of penalties to those who annoyed him. Champagne helped him. He also would not decline rum. As a punishment champagne would be temporarily stopped—with marked success. Despite his pain, and fear of impending death before he could reach India, he was *très difficile* regarding his diet. A Brahman, being of high caste, could cook for him, but he would trust nobody else. A chicken, alive and kicking,

would alone satisfy him. Having inspected it, he was content to see it taken away to be killed and cooked by the Brahman. Poor Johnny started forth one day *en route* for India. It is hoped that he got there. His head was encased in a knitted cap, and his little thin legs were covered to the hip by a pair of enormous white woollen stockings, knitted by some fair English philanthropist for an elephant. His wound had not yet healed, but hope filled his soul. It is notorious that hope works miracles.

Next came Private John Jones, and Hans, the Bavarian. They at first occupied the same ward close to each other, not on account of any personal liking, but purely due to the similarity of their condition and necessities of nursing. They might have been enemies once, but the fighting days of both were over. In their case it was indeed the calm after the storm.

Jones, a simple, uneducated labourer in civil life, must in some former existence have been the original of Mark Tapley. A shell had smashed his thigh grievously, and a bullet piercing his temple had exterminated one eye and remained in his brain. Day by day he smoked his pipe contentedly. "I am," he explained, "a lucky man. Most men would have been dead of this." The attempt to save his leg failed. Suddenly, one afternoon, his femoral artery burst in the wound. The Gael was in time. He stopped the hæm-

orrhage and, then and there, amputated the limb. Next morning Jones smoked his pipe as usual, smiled with content, and returned thanks for his good fortune. A few days later poor Jones suddenly lapsed into unconsciousness. There was obvious trouble in his head. The portion of the cranium suspected of concealing the lost bullet was opened. An abscess was found, a tube inserted, and the head bandaged. Next morning, Jones, minus a leg and a tube in his head, but normally conscious and happy, again smoked as usual. This time he was quite sure that his luck was phenomenal, and said so with a smile of decision. Poor hero! If he is alive after the war one trembles to think of the possibility of his being in want.

Hans, one leg also gone, the other foot rapidly becoming gangrenous from frostbite, and an elbow smashed, sang songs of Rhineland and grew childish when he heard a gramophone. He was always smiling and wheedling. His father was an hotel-keeper in Munich. That he had his right arm left was all he cared about. He said he could always find a stool in the hotel office. He begged for the company of another German. Master told him that there were plenty to choose from. Would he like the Kaiser in the bed next to him? "Ach," he cried, "if you bring him here I would spit in his face. He should have his throat cut." Whether his forceful language was meant merely to gain our goodwill, or he really

meant his words, who can say? It would seem that he was genuine, because, having been provided with the company of another Bavarian, the latter promptly quarrelled with him.

Jones eventually took to grunting with disgust whenever Hans sang, and asked to be shifted some way from him. He had grown to dislike Germans, and doubtless, apart from wounds received, had good cause for his sentiments.

Some school-girl in England had written a letter which reached its destination in a parcel of socks. It was, like many others, addressed to an unknown soldier. Private Smith, a young giant in body but possessing the brain of his years—19—came into possession. Weak from the loss of his leg from the hip, he almost cried over the letter, called the unknown writer his "little sweetheart," and, later, laboriously wrote his reply.

A Clearing Hospital in those earlier days deserved its name. It not only cleared the Field Ambulance of patients, but was cleared itself with painful suddenness.

St Joseph's College made such an excellent hospital that a mere Clearing Hospital had apparently become *de trop*. A Stationary Hospital with Nursing Sisters, beds, bedding, and a shipload of fallals, then a few hundred miles in the rear, was considered necessary to the dignity of such a location.

We sighed, and wondered what next. The tide of war had moved forward, but meanwhile the Clearing Hospitals

had filled all suitable forward places. We realised that, inadvertently, our unit had come to be in reserve. A new building had to be found where we were.

The search was a short one. With the Jute Factory still up our sleeves for slighter cases, Master fell upon a beautiful building, the Lycée. It was a boys' boarding-school, built in the form of a square, with a large quadrangle. There were well-equipped sleeping dormitories, wash-houses, an up-to-date kitchen, dining-hall, and class-rooms. It was there that Titus Oates had been educated, but the sanitation and beds were not of his time. It was quite empty, except for caretakers. Master chuckled. We shifted lock, stock, and barrel in a couple of hours, and grudged our successors in the Jesuit College nothing.

The genial bursar of the school helped us much, and also imparted information. The Boy, eager to learn, asked where James I. had lived while in exile at St Omer. The cicerone was not sure, but he thought probably with General French!

Unfortunately, however, the dormitories in the Lycée could not accommodate more than 150. Also, the beautiful spring beds were somewhat short for full-grown men. The thought that, in the event of a big fight, we might be hampered for room was unpleasant.

But fortune again favoured us. Adjacent lay an enormous building, half of which was a French Military Hospital and

the other half an old armoury, which had been equipped by the French with soldiers' beds. The French Surgeon-General was approached in a polite but determined spirit. Much argument ensued. In the end 300 of the armoury beds and one side of the building became ours, on condition that our wounded were fed from the French Military Hospital kitchen—at Fr. 2.50 per diem—in order to avoid a double kitchen command.

This latter arrangement in time became decidedly diverting. The presence of an R.A.M.C. non-commissioned officer cook standing by in the kitchen to watch the interests of our patients while the French cooks dished up was a daily sight. T. Atkins can always speak any language, or at all events never knows that he cannot. Our N.C.O. did not fail to uphold traditions for fair dues. Our men fed excellently.

Our plant now embraced three buildings. It looked, indeed, as if we were firmly rooted. At any rate, we thought we were ready for most things.

One night a celebrated party of Germans arrived from Ypres. The French Military Hospital was the very place for them. They were, one and all, in a shocking state. They had been treated by nuns in an extemporised hospital always under German shell fire. One day the only physician—a plucky Frenchman or Belgian—was knocked out. The nuns did their best alone, but their

knowledge was limited. The wounds—mostly compound thigh fractures—went wrong, very wrong. Next, the building was horribly strafed by German shells. The nuns fled, repented, and returned to their wounded enemies. Then a British motor-ambulance convoy intervened, and under much shell fire rescued the lot of them—fifty—at night.

There were seven amputations almost at once. Some ventured to grumble, as all wounded Germans are inclined to do. Be it said, however, in favour of some of them, that the grumblers were silenced by others. About thirty survived, and departed in due course by ambulance-train. One, grateful, wrote a letter of thanks:—

"It was on the 23rd of October at the dinner-time as I was wounded. A shot of a rifle went through my both legs and broke the bone of the right. One of my companions, who was lying by my side, dressed me with the dress-packet, which every man of the Germans have, and promised to send me our ambulance. In the same night, however, must go back to the Germans. So I was lying on my wound on the field from Friday until Monday. Then I was brought by some French soldiers to a house, where five or six German wounded lay. In the following night we were transported to Ypres in a French ambulance, where we were dressed for the first time, two days later. Then, for two

days, a French medical officer came and made a new dressing, but he didn't make anything on the wound itself. He said, 'You will go this week to a French hospital in the south of France, and then your leg will be very well treated,' but the week passed and the wound became worse daily. Now the Germans began to bombard the town, and forced the French to lay their hospital further behind the front. They removed all their wounded out of the town to a place of safety. The Germans, however, now brought to a civil hospital in the town. Now the most terrible time of my life began. . . . Day by day we were bombarded by the guns of our own people, and shells and bombs were always falling before and behind and on the sides of our hospital. . . . A Belgium civil medical man who should have dressed us went with four sisters away, and two sisters remained. So I and the other Germans were not dressed for five days. At this time the kitchen and other rooms of our hospital were destroyed by a bomb. A French medical officer came later and began to dress us during this great bombardment. It is clear, however, that because of the great number of fifty-four Germans, I was only dressed once in four or five days. My wound began to get very bad, and my leg was so swollen through the bad blood that it was

larger than three normal legs. At last English officers came, and promised to transport us to another place behind the front. On the evening of the 14th of Nov. we were taken away in a motor to an English hospital. It was a wonder that we got away without being killed in the hospital, which was under fire. In the English hospital a new time began for us. We are very well treated, and have very good medical help. My wound being twice dressed daily is now making good progress. I hope that my leg will be as well after the war as it was before. If so, I can only thank it the excellent English medical officers and sisters.

JAN BACH.

"2.12.14."

They were with us still on the day of Lord Roberts' funeral at St Omer. The guns fired in honour of the great soldier awoke them to a state of abject fear. Their own artillery had knocked their shelter about them once too often. Firmly believing that the Kaiser was still victoriously pressing onwards, they begged to be taken away. With difficulty and amusement they were reassured.

The Union Jack which had flown below our Red Cross flag from the beginning was borrowed to cover Lord Roberts' coffin. It was an honour we appreciated to the full.

(To be continued.)

“WHERE SHOULD THIS MUSIC BE?”

—*The Tempest.*

VARIOUS prophets foresaw the Great War and foretold its advent with more or less accuracy; writers of sensational fiction foretold some of its more lurid surprises—Zeppelin raids, for instance, even Tanks; but nobody, not even Mr H. G. Wells, ever conceived so improbable and fantastically sensible a notion as that the vast armies encamped in France should be officially accompanied and chaperoned by an elaborate extension of the Young Men's Christian Association, and that a Ladies' Auxiliary Committee of that peaceful and estimable organisation would be called upon to supply a clamouring army of some millions of men with concerts: concerts—not music-hall entertainments nor revue nor musical comedy—but simple, good, and extremely decorous concerts. If, say five years ago, some peculiarly bold Cassandra had predicted the work of the “Concerts at the Front” organisation, the incredulity of both the Army and the Y.M.C.A. would probably have been crushing. Yet since February 1915 some thousands of concerts have been given in France, Malta, and Egypt to many hundreds of thousands of men, and the supply will have to be kept up until the end of the war, because the demand is irresistible.

It is difficult to make people

over here realise what music means out at the Front, because the conditions out at the Front surpass imagination. Before August 1914 there was a glamour about war: there was romance in the word—horror, of course, and terror—but there was picturesqueness and colour. But the reality of modern warfare is indescribable, because the very words we have to describe it with are wrong. The word “battlefield” has a traditional glamour, but the picture it paints is wrong. A modern battlefield is an ashpit—miles and miles of an abomination of desolation—the bare earth charred and pounded and poisoned, swept bare of every growing thing, the air vibrating with the infernal nerve-shattering din and roar of high explosives and heavy artillery. Take a few million men of all classes straight out of ordinary civilised life: deprive them of every mortal thing they have been accustomed to: cut them off from every single pleasure and possibility of pleasure, every comfort, from books, possessions—leave them absolutely and literally nothing but the clothes they wear and the rations they eat, and those men will come out of the trenches grateful for the sense of being above ground on the open road, and for a momentary respite from shell fire, and just mentally

starving for something to change the current of their thoughts—something normal and happy and different, something beautiful.

The popular journalism and literature the war is producing dwells on the cheerfulness of the men, which is right, because the cheerfulness of the men is the most wonderful thing in the world. I have been out four times in the last two years. I have seen drafts of men leave the camps to go "up the line" when munitions were short, and when the men knew they were short, and knew exactly what that shortness meant to them. They went off with a smile—not a smile of laughter—but a genial, serious, good-tempered smile. And I've seen them come back in long, long ambulance trains, shattered, but still smiling. They are entirely indomitable; but if they were not, after all, human men, their cheerfulness would not be simple heroism but simple insensibility; and it is their very human side, and their very human need of sympathy, and their gratitude for very simple human pleasures, that is so intensely touching.

The organisation of our armies, improvised in a hurry, is the most wonderful organisation in the world. Munitions, food, clothing, hospital stores, everything the army needs is poured out at the front by the A.S.C. and transport services as easily as a conjurer produces yards of ribbon from some one else's hat. But there are three things which our wonderful

machine does not supply, and without which apparently our men cannot settle down happily—some sort of garden, some sort (any sort!) of dog, and some sort of music. Our men will make a garden anywhere, in defiance of all the rules in all the gardening books. The gardens at the camps out in France are the most touching gardens in the world. Some of them are quite beautiful, and the flowers seem to be as anxious to thrive under apparently impossible conditions as are the gardeners. At one place I saw sweet peas flourishing luxuriantly in soil that appeared to consist entirely of soot and cinders. But where the conditions are impossible for even the kindest, hardiest flowers, the men "make believe" with stones and bits of glass. They collect white stones, paint them different colours, and arrange them in beautiful patterns, or, out of bits of broken glass from different coloured bottles, make their regimental crest on the ground where a garden won't grow; and even sometimes where it will, for man's love of decorations is not limited to those supplied by Mother Nature.

Then every camp seems to have a dog, and the camp dog generally comes to the concert, and, of course, on to the little platform, where he trots about like a somewhat distraught stage-manager, and gets a round of applause from his audience, who like to see him personally superintending the performance. I have friendly recol-

lections of more than one bored and puzzled little dog sitting at my feet while I recited, obviously marvelling what we were all doing, and why we were doing it, gazing at the audience with mystified eyes that asked what pleasure could possibly be derived from such strange proceedings, and very relieved when they were over.

But the British soldier knows he wants some sort of music even before he has realised he wants a garden and a dog. If he can't have music he must have some sort of cheerful noise, or a noise that will pass for cheerful, even if it be a gramophone or a mouth-organ. We once came across a "band" a lonely detachment of motor-drivers had improvised, with cardboard megaphones doing duty as trombones, and an empty petrol tin for a drum. It seems that any privation or hardship is borne more cheerfully than the deprivation of amusement, and that the British army can stand anything except being bored. The men don't exactly quote Shakespeare's—

"Sweet recreation barred, what doth
ensue
But moody and dull melancholy,
Kinsman to grim and comfortless
despair;
And at her heels a huge infectious
troop
Of pale distemperatures and foes to
life?"

but they will wait hours in the bitterest wind and rain and sleet to get into a concert; they'll miss their prin-

cipal square meal rather than miss a performance; and one boy in a hospital said quite placidly, "It's worth having a foot off to hear a show like this." When a hut is crowded out the men will stand nine deep outside to hear what they can through the doors and windows.

We play to all sorts and conditions of men,—the men of half creation—men from the uttermost ends of the empire—all classes, all creeds, all branches of the army: the men of the A.S.C. and transport services working like galley-slaves day after day, month after month, and year after year at the bakeries, the forage-camps, docks, the motor-transport centres, veterinary camps, railway sidings; the men of all the different brigades and contingents in training, now on the eve of their departure for the "line," then on their return, when they are resting after months in the trenches, sometimes right up behind the trenches under shell fire (but the firing-line parties consist of men only), and the sick and wounded in the many hospitals, and it is very difficult to say which audiences are most moving. Sometimes a concert is given to two hundred wounded men in beds wheeled up round the stage, with the convalescent cases behind them; two hours later our audience may be 1500 or nearly 2000 men in a great hangar or shed or cinema hall, or a larger audience still when we are in Rouen

or Havre, and can play in the big theatres there.

When the concerts were started, we determined that whatever was sent out should be good of its kind: this rule has been adhered to, and there has been no temptation to lower the standard, because the men not only like what is good, but prefer it, and wherever we have gone we have found a real love of what is simple and beautiful. We vary the programme as much as possible, giving classical music, selections from opera, glees, trios, and concertos, the old ballads and folk-songs, as well as popular rag-times and modern chorus-songs. A "Concert Party" generally consists of a soprano, contralto, bass, tenor, violinist or 'cellist, pianist and accompanist, and often a ventriloquist or conjurer, or some one to recite. In fact, the entertainment given is a mixture of a ballad concert, a recital, and a children's party. When we take plays we give tragedy, comedy, and farce at the same performance; it is a classical recipe and a sound one.

At first we set forth, if not exactly with trepidation, with a little uncertainty, for we were out to amuse our audiences and not to bore them: we need not have hesitated. In those early days a Colonel in charge of a certain camp where we were to give a concert warned me that the men — dookers recruited mainly from the East End of London — were a "rough lot." However, when we found that this

particular audience were a little late in filling the hut because they had all insisted upon washing first, and moreover, when they evinced a decided preference for Bach, our apprehensions vanished for ever. And this autumn, by way of celebrating Shakespeare's tercentenary and the centenary of Sheridan, I took out a small dramatic company with a repertoire of "Macbeth," "The School for Scandal," as well as "The Twelve Pound Look," "In the Fog," and "The Bathroom Door," lent us by their respective authors.

Our little company of strolling players and musicians is limited in numbers because of the difficulties of getting transported from place to place; we aim at giving three performances a day, working the hospitals in the afternoons and the camps in the evenings, and have often twenty-five miles to motor from one performance to another. We play anywhere, generally in the Y.M.C.A. huts, but in hangars and warehouses and sheds, by the roadside, in open fields, in barns. We gave "The School for Scandal" in a wood, with half our audience on the grass, the other half dangerously overcrowding the branches of the nearest trees; "Macbeth" in a great hangar, with army blankets for the walls of the banqueting-hall and a sugar-box for the throne.

On our return to England one newspaper, referring to the conditions under which we had given plays, remarked that we were "not overpowered by

stage scenery." We certainly were not; we managed very well without any at all. Red Cross screens in hospitals and army blankets everywhere else answered the purpose. Occasionally we found scenery that the men had made themselves, and very well they had made it. At one place the stage was provided with one of the best backcloths I have ever seen, and it was with regret we had to cover it up when it didn't happen to suit our plays.

"Macbeth" was an enormous success. It was chosen because it is the one play of Shakespeare's where the tragedy can be given in a few scenes with five characters. And what a marvellous tragedy it is!—so swift and inevitable—its appeal so simple and direct. Its reception was wonderful. We gave it to vast audiences; they listened breathlessly in absolute silence, and then cheered and cheered and cheered. Men who had been in many battles since August 1914 were thrilled with horror over the murder of Duncan, which impressed them as being far more terrible than any of their own experiences.

There never were such audiences in the world before—so keen, so appreciative, so grateful. They are far quicker than any ordinary theatre audiences. They seized every point in both classical and modern plays, and they had a point of their own in "The Twelve Pound Look" of which no theatre audience nor Sir James Barrie ever dreamed. There is a moment when the heroine says to her former husband, who is arguing

with her, "Yes, you were a moral man, and chatty—and quite the philanthropist." It puzzled me to find those words invariably brought down the house, and the point had to be explained to me. It seems that up in the firing line, where the "minor horrors of war" are not to be exterminated, "chatty" is the army's latest word for "verminous"—hence the roar of delight that greeted my line when the audience was from the trenches.

The memories carried away from those audiences of thousands of men in khaki get blurred into one vast impression of a sea of faces, alert, intelligent, full of magnetism and sympathy and imagination; but there are many things that stand out clearly from unforgettable scenes: the cheers or war-cry of the South Africans, for instance. I have heard cheers from the men of every Dominion, but the South Africans have a wonderful way of their own. One man calls and the others answer; the peculiar cry and the mighty shout are repeated three times, and when it is done by an audience of about 700 men, as I heard it, the very ground shakes. I was told that the men only do it when they feel like it; it is spontaneous and not done to order.

Then there are memories of little incidents that are so significant and human. One lad came up in the dark and said he wished to give me a "souvenir," and pressed a button off his tunic into my hand; he said it was months

since he had seen a lady, much less heard one speak. Another boy, straight from the trenches, tried to tell me that the music had "brought him back to life again," and then he broke down and cried.

For the laughter, the interest, and the music is more than mere "amusement" to those armies of men. One chaplain from the other side of the world came up after one of the performances and said: "I am a Puritan, with a Puritan's view of the theatre—and you know what a deep prejudice that is,—but I cannot tell you how grateful I am that my boys should have this hour of happiness; you don't know what it means to us." And when he tried to tell me what it did mean there were tears in his eyes. A tremendous barrier had evidently gone down when he could speak from his heart in praise of drama and music.

At home, in peace time, music is so often a mere accompaniment to something else in life—conversation or a meal. Drama is so generally overloaded with stage effects and pomp and circumstance that its primitive elements are extinguished. Artists were "unproductive workers," to use the language

of bygone philosophers,—those strange people who created a science of political economy divorced from ethics, demanded a religion devoid of mystery, and named the chaotically unreasonable result "Rationalism."

But out there—where life and death are stark realities, where life is swept bare of all artificialities and death is abroad, visible and undisguised—there, music, the straightest road to the unseen world of spiritual beauty, fulfils more than its tangible function of cheering up the men, although that is "a work of great military value," to quote the words of a distinguished doctor after a concert in a rest camp: it is more than food for their spirits, hungry for loveliness after the abnormal hideous experience of weariness or pain and tension. Music ministers with magical results to minds distressed and overtaxed. It is comfort, refreshment, and a fire from heaven destroying the seeds of despondent thoughts or moods that dulness, pain, or loneliness can sow in the most gallant hearts, for "Where music is there can no ill thing be."

LENA ASHWEILL.

HADES UP TO DATE.

AFTER due persuasion Jim's father (knowing she would one day need a profession) had allowed her to come home from South Africa to study art. What eminent Artist-professors termed her "undoubted talent" developed wonderfully during two years of hard work—and then Jim's father died.

Her income now required adding to considerably if it were to be brought level with the allowance her father had decreed would cover Art School fees, necessary pocket-and-dress money, and living expenses at a sufficiently comfortable Residential Club for ladies in Kensington, where abided Jim's best (art-student) friend.

When Jim came to England a rich, selfish, elderly and maiden aunt desired her as an unpaid substitute for the latest departed "useful companion." At the time of her brother's death this worthy lady again offered a home—on the old conditions. But Jim knew how much peace for painting would be possible under Auntie's roof,—the old lady was jealous of art. The girl wouldn't hear of her father's careful planning, and her own loved labour, being lost; she made a fight for fame instead of sliding easily into fortune and dull routine. She counted up her savings and reduced income, finished the term at the Art School—where fees were payable in advance—and then arranged to rent a resi-

dential studio (just in Chelsea and not quite in Fulham) for two happy years. She knew she required at least another twelve months at the Art School, but what savings would be left at the end of that time with which to make a start? "Now or never!" said practical, though artistic, Jim.

The war broke out just when Jim had spent several valuable weeks arranging her little home with her own pictures, what she christened an "alias sofa-bed," boxes covered with chintz to match the curtains, a couple of really old cottage chairs, and a gate-leg table picked up for an argument and few shillings in a Chelsea rag-and-rubbish shop. This cheaper mode of living had met with the disapproval of Jim's father; he had always considered her younger than she really was.

But the war . . .! Jim longed to be off fighting—but she was only a woman. Even had she been already trained, voluntary Red-Crossing was beyond her unless she could make a little money; however, even quite excellent war "pot boilers" for the press (which had reproduced her art before now) failed to sell, and Auntie's manner and speech more than suggested she had "told Jim so," also that the studio would be best shut up.

Between persevering at art, Jim attended lectures and exams. on "First Aid" and

"Home Nursing." It takes time to make a Florence Nightingale.

"Will I *ever* be much *real* use?" sighed Jim. She was not the girl to be content with ordinary routine work—she wanted to do something bigger.

Then came the call for women to help the nation in other ways.

The difficulty was getting a job at a wage large enough to cover the rent of the studio as well as that of "digs" nearer munition-making districts. Erith and Woolwich were far distant from her little home in the west, and it was impossible to make 'buses run early enough to fit in with trains and shifts; she wisely quailed at combining long station-ward walks with sudden hard labour. Then a job cropped up just beyond Whitechapelle—the way it pronounced itself in war-time! It was a long, long way to go, work started at 8 A.M. sharp, and Jim liked not rising so early. Still, she decided to get used to it, and succeeded.

Much glory of this war work was denied her—because she was obliged to make money out of it. Had she been a man, undoubtedly and immediately she would have climbed towards a commission in the army or navy—and warriors *are* paid. True, munition-making can injure health in various ways, but it is *not* so dangerous as fighting! She soothed her painful feelings by expending all spare pennies on food for

a British Tommy in a German prison camp, whom she "adopted for the period of the war." And she threw her very heart and soul into her new work.

It was no sitting-down-filing-cartridges-or-making-paper-fuses-or-gauging job (tiring and monotonous as all that may be), but standing eight or nine hours daily filing down forty-five to fifty-five stumps of metal alloy per hour on solid, undrilled, "rough castings," for Mills Grenade "centres"—the part that screws inside the bronze barrel-shaped casing. Jim's "centres" were always done best. Where women labour for mankind there is psychology. Some of the girls said—

"Jim is awfully slow, though—she must be, to manage to finish them off so *unnecessarily* well."

Well, perhaps it did take that damsel a week or two longer than some (but by no means all) of the others to keep up the day-long to a 45 per hour standard, and she nearly flopped over her vice at the big long table several times. Her reputation for slowness was carefully fostered, and Jim retaliated by sticking to that of being "most dependable and careful," as well as working up to the proper "numbers." And she was promoted "Tempy. C.O." whenever the Forewoman was absent through illness or other causes, though there were dames and damsels who considered the Guv'nor (*alias* the Manager of the Works) no

judge of character. It was all very hard work and unclean, but infinitely more satisfactory than poodle-faking for Auntie.

"You'll break down *completely*," prophesied that lady hopefully. "And then *I'll* have you on my hands as an invalid!"

But after six months even she had to admit that Jim was getting more and more acclimated to this "*vita nuova*," her career as a labourer. In spite of Auntie's daily temptings theatrewards, &c., the girl went to bed early and also stayed there most of Sundays, —Nature forced her to consider it her duty. In fact, though always almost too tired out to stand upright by the time she got home of an evening, Jim was rubbing along all right. . . . And then food prices climbed higher and higher, and threatened Prisoner Tommy as much as herself. Of course, *he* must not suffer! There was a certain amount of "overtime" to be done, but this did not enhance her wage regularly enough.

Gradually more men left the factory, and the Guv'nor substituted women where possible. Additional Government contracts came along for more "rough castings"—this time queer engine parts for use in air, on land, and under water. In fact, the Guv'nor was enterprising besides being clever, strict, kind, and considerate.

Where Jim or one of her mates trimmed forty-five and fifty-five "centres" in an hour, newly invented machinery now

did fifteen or twenty per minute—with the help of less highly paid flapper human labour. Wonderful machines arrived also to do other things—so it is that the sinews of war cost less than they might. Jim remained a "trimmer" at the same hourly wage—a workman's wage unattainable in peace time after so short an apprenticeship. The aero and other work was no less hard; but pistons, exhaust valves, crank cases, bearings, &c., wove more varied romance (to Jim) than even hundreds and thousands of grenade centres had done. Jim's "slow" reputation lived still, and speed comparison was more difficult as the castings varied much; but she would not do her work less thoroughly.

There were rumours, though. "Time sheets" were coming. There were to be new shifts of women for moulding "time fuses" for shells (yet another Government and Guv'norly enterprise) in a newly adapted foundry, against which leant to the new shed that was now the "finishing shop." Foundry supervisors were to be selected from amongst the "old hands"—women made their *début* at the Works in the form of "trimmers," and Jim was one of three left of the original gang. Meanwhile, Jim had developed muscle for heavy jobs, and it was discovered she did intricate work better than the others, though it happened that there was as yet not a great deal of scope for this latter talent. Still, she was the most useful worker in the Finishing shop, and more and more complex

work arrived as time went on. The foundry was the newest sensation, though.

"At last some chance of getting ahead!" quoth Jim. "If the others are content to stick at one level for ever, I'm not."

But though he had hinted in the past as to her suitability for a more responsible post as soon as ever an opportunity occurred, the Guv'nor felt not justified in promoting her as Captain of one of the new foundry shifts; he did not consider her strong enough—and, as a certain veteran of the Works put it, "'twasn't no lydy's job." Jim loved her own work exceedingly, but it was a little galling when one of her mates was created supervisor of the trial shift in the foundry—after several others had been given the opportunity of saying "No" very flatly to the job, too. Some women, especially those of the nature of Jim, are snobby about making things which go bang, and Jim was already making things which directly helped things to go bang. But there was no chance of promotion in her own shop, as the Guv'nor (and, according to him, the Board of Trade) would not allow of her helping the busy man in immediate command by cutting off such "runners" as were accessible, and so forth (before the "castings" were given to the girls to trim), on a screeching, crude, circular saw,—certainly it hungered to cut human beings in half, and nearly blinded them with spiteful showers of metal splinters and dirty oil. Also, there was other machinery which made

noises like a maxim gun, and so forth, which she was not allowed to use.

"The poor dears merely need to be treated with respect!" quoth Jim. She felt she had failed to "make good" altogether.

She was too tired when at home to practise art. Every one (from her charwoman to Auntie, and the latter was not contradicted) was convinced she earned pounds a week; whereas, had she been a typist in the city on the same wage, they would have considered her still poor. Such is the reputation of the munition-maker. At the Works she was "one of them reel lydies wot didn't need to do nothink." Most of her mates drew separation allowances besides their pay, and lived with fond mammas who prepared hot suppers at night and even 6 A.M. breakfasts for their war-working daughters. Jim cooked her own on a gas-stove, but left the washing up to a charwoman.

"It's pretty rotten, though," she murmured to herself, as the circular saw screamingly bit into metal which a man pushed against it. "It's . . . it's just Limbo—the borderland of the real Hades next door."

The dirty, fleeting, leather belt of the saw slipped naughtily off the whirling pulley-wheel on the long steel shaft revolving up by the whitewashed ceiling-boards. Silence was only broken by a muttered protest from the man, and a whir-whir as of skates on ice—the files of the pinafores girls subduing ultra-

roughness of aluminium and brass castings gripped tight in vices: castings large and castings small, castings of every shape, and piled up on benches and shelves.

"Not to mention being done out of exciting experiences, too!" mused Jim. "Talk about 'wretched souls of those who lived without infamy and without desire!' . . . Yes, and the 'deep hell' receives me not, and therefore progress is barred towards a higher realm. Verily it is 'without hope living in desire,' as Dante found the folk doing in the 'first circle' of Inferno."

Of course Jim was mad—the girls glanced at each other.

"Danty ain't the name of the new h'engineer in the machine-shop over there?" hazarded an ex-millinery assistant, nodding at a great, long, low building across the yard.

"Possibly," Jim smiled sweetly. She was not snobby with her work pals, but it was difficult to see eye to eye with them sometimes. She had been working on a huge casting, weighing over half a hundredweight, for a mysterious new engine of war; the new Overlooker had reckoned it would fill up the rest of her day.

"Well, I've finished this last one in five hours, Sims, and now I could do that thing for you, as Brown wants you in the packing-shed."

The "Tank" was a heavy job, the day hot, and five hours well under even her own record for that type of "casting."

"Ho? . . . H'm." Sims bent again over a rather tricky bit of trimming. He had left extra bits on Jim's casting, too! . . .

"There ain't no more work coming in for you lydies ter-day, miss. You h'oughter h'equalise things h'up, like. The Guv'nor, 'e don't like ter see you wivaht work if 'e 'appens ter come parst 'ere, like. . . . Getting them Moulders inter trouble, that's wot you'll be doing h'of; and them's h'as work in that there foundry acrost the yard can't work no 'arder, they can't. . . . Moulding them carstings h'is a difficult job, it h'is; and—" he finished with conviction—"you lydies couldn't do it, not if you tried."

Aluminium - moulding requires (according to the laws of labour) a seven years' apprenticeship; anyhow, Jim could have done Sims' job rather more neatly than himself, good workman as he was. Sims was shocked at them lydies being able to work as hard and as well as they undoubtedly did—war has laid so shamelessly bare much about skill in labour-land. In fact, Sims was an ultra-staunch trades-unionist, and was in no hurry to recognise special talent among his "lydylike" flock; besides, it *was* an extra tricky job, and he had not been Overlooker in the trimming-shop long enough to have actually seen "that there Miss Jimes's" even more difficult achievements, though her factory reputation now was that "she knew her work"—high praise, indeed, in the realm of labour.

"And I suppose you'll make me put 'all day' on it, when it comes to fill up my time-sheet!" smiled Jim grimly. "Oh dear! . . . But Sims, you *are* making jabs on the skin of that casting—where the file-handle touches it." . . . She looked at him sadly. "There, at the side. . . . Now, if I'd done that . . .!"

One of the girls began loudly to use a chisel and hammer. Sims couldn't bring himself to be rude to a woman, whatever an "Overlooker's" thoughts might be towards a mere "Hand" who dared—actually dared—to criticise his work. Somehow his fostered theories as to social equality would *not* transpose satisfactorily into practice—right in labour-land though this community was. He scowled, filed harder, and rejoiced that other people's chip-chipping forbade further conversation. But that loud noise stopped suddenly.

"Two whole hours before we can 'clock off' for the day!" Jim sighed.

"And you've only made yourself hot and tired for *nothing*!" sneered another girl sweetly: she had been racing Jim on a similar casting all day—it was still much unfinished.

"These 'Tanks' always make one extra hot and tired, anyhow; they are so big and unwieldy," smiled Jim. "Don't you find that?"

Now it happened that the Guv'nor disapproved of people asking to go home before the appointed time,—his ideas on discipline did not alter even when it would have been to his advantage had a worker chosen

to forgo two hours pay—the rule benefited workers during possible slack times also. Besides, jobs *did* crop up unexpectedly sometimes, though to-day new machinery was being fixed where it affected the "trimmers" department rather vitally; poor Jim especially loathed putting in time in the "shop," when a dear tricky little task after her own heart was withheld from her.

"I'll go and sing somethink abaht H'unemployment H'under the Guv'nor's H'own H'office winder—loudly." She spoke Cockney frequently at the Works, and was not always discovered. "Or I'll start on that there 'Ymn of 'Ate, 'ere, jest cawse you gels 'as somethink to do, and I ain't."

"Well, wotcher swot for!" snapped somebody in difficulties with a heavy, dirty, odd-shaped brass object which the vice found awkward to hold.

"Let me help you," was Jim's cool counter-attack, and she wedged in little pieces of wood ingeniously about the tiresome bit of metal work.

Sims refused to see; often and reluctantly he was obliged to assist them "lydies" over heavy or trick jobs, though he took full advantage of that there Miss James's capacity for surmounting such obstacles by herself.

He would have been shocked to admit, even to himself, that he enjoyed spinning out work—it was his distorted subconscious joint tribute to "this 'ere'orrible war" and to future trades-unionism.

"Dear me," Jim pondered, as she inspected various aero-

plane engine parts. "What a difference it makes living now instead of before Dante's time. Just think of Albergo of Siena getting his Papa (the Bishop of that Tuscan town) to 'put in the fire' poor Ser Griffolino d'Arezzo,—all because he jestingly said he could 'raise himself through the air in flight'—or to be more correct, just because he would not show Albergo how it was done! . . . And then, on top of that, Minos went and condemned the poor dear Griffolino to the 'last pouch of ten' in the 'eighth circle of Hell' for the alchemy he practised in the world! . . . I suppose Minos will remain prejudiced against every one connected with flying so long as he has to stay in Hell himself. I should like to know all the details that led to *his* being sent there, though."

Somebody — obviously not one of the workmen, in spite of his brown dungaree overalls — entered the shop, and Jim seized the opportunity to make a humble request.

"Might I lend a hand with the shell-work in the foundry?"

Sims glared at her — had he not told her she must make all advances through him? . . . As was Dante's, Jim's progress Inferno-wards was at first impeded. The aid of a still higher power had to be invoked; it was known that the Guv'nor considered Jim (like Dante) had been "lured by false objects of desire from the pursuit of" — the Guv'nor's conception of — "the true good."

However, being a man of wisdom, that high authority concluded it might be as well for Miss James to see how very unpleasant the foundry really was. On permission being granted she did not waste time, though she developed sudden qualms about "getting through" on such a hot afternoon (after breaking her "tank" record, too!) without making a fool of herself.

A wave of heat rolled out into the bright sunlight from the portals of the great gloomy barn — air distinctly hotter than the sultriest August afternoon could make it. The big door leading to the busy, dusty yard (fast filling up with new shops and sheds) was opened politely by a perspiring, bare-armed gentleman in grimy trousers, corduroy cap, and blue-striped shirt — Jim knew that it had been clean that morning.

"Of course Virgil, when he 'met Dante in the wood' outside Limbo, was differently attired," she thought. "And what a pity his feeling the heat, so obviously more than did Dante's guide, spoils the poetical impression."

She took a deep breath of more or less fresh air outside (copper refining, &c., accounted for sulphur and nitric fumes) and entered the Gate of Hades.

"For oh! if there *be* an Inferno on earth, it is this, it is this!" she misquoted to herself. "Dear me, I'm awfully in tune with the Poets!"

She recollected, one evening, rattling homewards in a 'bus, a veritable Arsenalite from Woolwich itself (aristocrats of

Munition-land!), rendering colloquially and cheerfully the refrain of a popular ditty, which has become sacred to munitionists, *vid* Messrs R. P. Weston, Francis, Day, & Hunter, Harry Champion, and the 'Alls—

"'Elp ter mike the shot an' shell,
Wot will send the 'Uns ter 'Ell,
Tho' ye've never done a stroke of work
afore!"

This was what the flushed, overalled girls were at in the torrid atmosphere of that shed somewhere "dahn H'east." It was puzzling to Jim that the process of despatching the 'Uns somewhere should involve the senders' going to the same place first. Was it ordained that these many heroines should be given precedence, so they might be out of the region when the particular Boches they (the girls) were fated to be responsible for arrived at the stage of undergoing a suitable spell of quarantine? . . . Or perhaps it was necessary to create a new Inferno on account of the original having to be reserved as an Internment Camp for "Kayser" William, Count "Zeppelen," and so on.

"Anyhow," decided Jim, "these girls of Poplar, Bow,"—she pronounced it correctly, to rhyme with "wow"—"and Stepney must be piling up nice little savings of atonement for future faults; they can't have enough energy left for sinning during the rest of the day, though it is but a five-hour shift—at present."

They had asked the Guv'nor to allow them to work eight

hours a day, now they were used to it.

About half a dozen gas-furnaces glowed and roared unceasingly in a straight, brick trench built in the middle of the floor of this big, lofty, dim place. In each of "these 'ere fire-'oles" (to quote a worker) was a veritable Witches' Cauldron—a huge metal crucible: surely they were filled from that same noisy Phlegethon, that "river of fire," or (as Dante more gruesomely put it) of "boiling blood"?

"May I watch the other Souls and so learn their 'tride'?" Jim asked her late work-mate and present supervisor. The girls quite rejoiced at meeting a kindred spirit—a reel lydy, too!—and (as did the poet comrades of Virgil unto Dante) they "made her of their band."

Then she was introduced to number so-and-so furnace, and approached it with what she hoped looked like self-confidence, though it felt awfully like . . . well, not exactly funk, but, anyhow, quite proper respect for the Element of Fire.

"You must push the scum away, sideways—like that, with the back of this ladle," shouted the supervisor kindly, above the "whor-r-rr" of the gas. Apparently one "dipped" (also sideways) in the opposite direction. Dipped into pure, transparent, red-glowing "water" lying under the silvery "skin" of the surface. . . . "And don't you splash!"

At the beginning one of the girls spilt some molten metal

on Mrs Billy's then merely stockinged instep—her stout topboots had not then come; more recently another worker splashed and set the supervisor's hair on fire. Mrs Billy had merely spoken in the same kind, half-joking way. No wonder the girls had given her a real gold-handled umbrella on her recent birthday!

Practical Jim appreciated the fact that work in here was done with clearer purpose than the toiling Dante saw and described; of course he experienced Hell in 1300, and she in 1916. It was wonderful how the mass of molten aluminium and some minor ingredients became the "time fuses" for — Jim had already discovered just what kind of shell, Mr Censor! And after being "machined up," fitted to the projectiles of shells, and doing their terrible work, just such funny little (though German) mushrooms became the basis for those dear little "memento" rings sent from the trenches. But as she (rather inconsistently) refused to think of what a hand-grenade was meant for, she tried to avert her thoughts from the killing powers of these particular messengers of death. Still—she could not quite. If each fuse meant a single big bang on one of the many Fronts, what a lot of noise and unpleasantness was represented here! We must be sending "'Ell to the 'Uns,"—countless sackloads containing each a thousand were regularly piled up on to munition waggons outside in

the yard. Oh yes, Jim saw life from the finishing-shop windows.

For instance, she had had proof of its being hot in the foundry, for the girls always passed out with faces dough-white or beetroot-red, as the heat "took" them; they donned woolly mufflers and heavy coats over their rather dirty pinafores, even on the hottest afternoons, before going outside. Also she had sniffed the fringe of escaping waves of hot air as the big doors swung to after them; and heard a roar like that made by the river Phlegethon (Dante likened that to "the hum which the beehives make") from the "next circle"—when there was not too much shindy in "Limbo," otherwise her own shop.

Formalities like "Mrs" and "Miss" had gone months ago; quite a long while back even simple surnames were abbreviated—James became "Jim," Williamson "Billy." As a full-blown lady supervisor, however, Billy was promoted to "Mrs Billy" by her own gang.

"But you ain't reely *my* boss, ye know," laughed Jim. "I h'always called you pline Billy in our shop, an' I ain't goin' ter start putting on no Missus now. . . . Ugh! them tibles ain't 'arf 'ot!" She had allowed her hand to rest inadvertently on one of the iron-topped tables whereon stood the iron moulds, and she will bear the mark for some time to come. "This plice do put one in mind of that there Dante's H'Inferno,

which don't 'arf bring me to the 'Lingua vulgata' of that there gent's country. So 'ere goes; I'm goin' to christen you 'Signora buon' Diavolo.' Literally that means 'a good devil,' and in its idiomatic sense it's a term of endearment."

But the difficult and really "skilled" art of "dipping" and "pouring" must not become involved in side issues. Well, Jim dipped with a giant-iron-soup-ladle-with-a-long-straight-handle (of course it has a tidy name of its own), and the lipped "pudding-bowl" at the end was at once red-hot. The handle became as unpleasantly warm as it could. . . . The little bag of wet sacking, which served as a glove on her right hand, steamed and began to scorch. You could not wet it overmuch, or the water would have found its way into the crucible—and then exploded it. Jim's eyes and face smarted painfully in the hot breath of the furnace. She turned about and rested the heavy spoonful of now silvery liquid on the edge of the table—little tables, stretching in a row, in front of the furnaces, which must not be shaken if the metal were to set properly. The moulds (iron bricks in two halves, upper and lower, which contained two holes, narrowing roundly towards the bottom) lay ready.

Jim slipped her "gloved" hand down the hot handle as far as possible, coaxed off a "drip" of metal on the table edge, and "poured." . . . Had she poured too heavy—? The

silvery liquid had flowed almost right over the edge of the round holes; they had to be more than filled,—she had noticed that whilst watching the others at work. The metal cooled—subsided in the centre—subsided almost a quarter of an inch below the level of the mould's mouth. And it had been piled up above that level a second or so before! Obviously the first three castings were poured too light. Aluminium contracts more than other metals.

"A little heavier," said Mrs Billy shoutingly, as she passed by mopping her brow.

Carefully Jim poured along the whole row, dipping again and again as it became necessary. "Phew! That furnace is doing its best to scorch me through and through!" she said, but its noisy breath drowned her words. Two girls armed with iron tongs, not unlike ordinary fire-irons, stood on the opposite side of her table and removed the "lids" of the moulds, and took the castings out as they hardened. Three moulds at another table had to be deported elsewhere to have the castings removed by force; some one had "over-poured" badly, and time was wasted. Nervous of emulating her, Jim poured again, and anxiously watched as the castings were popped first on to one pair of scales and then on to a second—still too hot to touch except with the tongs. Joy! She had actually got some right, and if the other girls could all stand the heat in here, of course she could too.

She might still get the captaincy of the new extra shift. "It's not very difficult work," she told herself.

But soon things seemed more instead of less difficult. The weight of her castings began to vary rather a lot; her hand would not keep steady. . . . How hot her head was! That last one ought to have been all right—yet it wasn't. . . . What happened to souls who couldn't stand the higher temperatures of the place the song alluded to? Did they sizzle up and cease to matter any more in the great cycle of things that be?

"These horrid, impromptu, sacking gaiters make one ever so much hotter—I'm sure my insteps won't get any drips on them. . . . And it *was* mean of Dante not to mention something about not wearing thin, old tennis shoes in Hades proper—they are so comfortable in Limbo, too!" The iron floor was unpleasantly warm. St Lawrence must have felt like this when he was on the grid,—was it St Lawrence's martyrdom which supplied the subject for that queer old picture in that old Venetian church? "There's my overall scorching again, and one can't get much away from that beastly furnace—whilst pouring—or the metal would cool too much!" Would it be better to be boiled or roasted? Were those too last castings too heavy or too light? . . . Would she "come over queer" (to be colloquial) as Dante did once or twice whilst in Hell? Would she—?

"Better come and work this

side now." Mrs Billy's even tones were soothing—Jim felt as Dante did when help came from Heaven. "We always change about." The supervisor personified, like Beatrice, divine reason. "You take these tongs and lift the lids of the moulds off the pins in the lower halves of the moulds, and put the castings each separately on the scales; the correct ones go on to those racks, the light and heavy ones there and there, to be dealt with later."

"You're pourin' 'eavy. . . . You're pourin' light," loudly chanted the women with the tongs warningly.

The tables became hot from the metal being poured into the moulds, but everything else was hot too—air, walls, and all. This job of picking off the lids of the moulds, extracting and weighing the castings, and tossing them down the bench, was dreadfully easy and monotonous, . . . yet how difficult it was becoming! The iron "bricks" were heavy to pick up with tongs—wobbly in spite of frequent renewal. At last one lid refused to go on to more than one pin at a time. Then it refused to go near the lower half of the mould at all! . . . Things began to swing about—Jim recalled vague sentences from the "Divine Comedy" about Jerusalem, and other places being considered the "centres of the Universe." What was she? . . . Had she had anything stronger than tea and condensed milk for lunch? Who *was* it who met Dante in Hell and said—

"Whoever of this herd stops for an instant lies afterwards a hundred years without fanning himself when the fire smites him; therefore, go onward . . . and then I will rejoin my band which goes lamenting its eternal penalties"?

Of course! She must have partaken of the Waters of Lethe, that other river of Inferno—that would account for her forgetfulness as to her past existence.

"Better go outside and have a 'cooler'; that's what we used to have to do at first." Mrs Billy's divine reasoning was again like unto that of Beatrice in heaven—a terrible long way off.

Jim made what she thought was a straight line for the door.

"'Ere y'are, Miss—this way, Miss," said the grimy gentleman in the blue shirt kindly. "And mind yer don't tike cold too sudden like, Miss."

The great door shut behind her.

"Why, you look like a drowned rat, Jimmy!" said a voice from her own shop.

"H'm. . . . A bit warm, eh?" inquired another worker. She was not looking exactly cool herself as she hack-sawed through the formidable "runner" of a piston. It was hard work anyhow, and this was a *very* hot August afternoon.

"Had enough?" said somebody else. "Already? How do you feel, eh?"

Jim expressed her feelings as coherently and truthfully as was possible. She felt more

than warm, more than damp, and rather—well, rather inebriated.

"H'm, you *have* had enough, though?"

"For the moment, perhaps," she admitted. "But, of course, I did do my 'tank' in record time—and it was a bad casting, too; and to-day it's been hotter than usual! The foundry girls go in there quite fresh, and work five hours—I had already worked five hours on a very heavy job."

She did not look for approval from those who had been pressed to take on the work in the foundry, and refused point-blank to do so. Jim had never been given the option of relinquishing her post in the finishing-shop; besides, she was *always* chosen to do the most difficult jobs, and did them better than the other girls could have done them. They didn't like that.

"Where's that *wonderful* British pluck?" sighed one.

"Where's that *wonderful* talent for doing *everything*?" added another exultantly.

"You've got proper stumped this time, Jimmy, you 'ave," chimed in a third.

They would have been more sympathetic, Jim knew, had they realised how bad she felt—but she wasn't going to let them see. She returned to the foundry, and poured a goodly number of castings correctly during her various turns at the furnaces. "It was partly sheer fluke, no doubt," she owned. "Still, I 'ave 'elped to mike the shot an' shell wot will send the 'Uns—ugh!

How horrible it all is, really! . . . And how nice to emerge into the earthly paradise of the yard in the cool of the evening!"

As a matter of fact it was a very warm evening, but comparison was nice for once.

Returning homewards, one of her work-mates told her that she now looked like a cold suet-pudding—but it merely served to make Jim want to get acclimatised, like the fuse-girls. However, for once she secretly (almost) agreed with the Guv'nor as to her being unsuited to the job,—incidentally also with the Cockney gentleman who had been at the works longer than any one else—even since before the present head of the firm had appeared on the scene.

"T'ersn't no lydy's job." This veteran Overseer always wagged his head sadly when he saw the women tackling anything unwieldy. "T'ersn't no woman's job. But them's the Guv'nor's h'orders—t'ersn't fer *me* ter say. . . . But *t'ersn't no lydy's job!*"

Certainly, nearly all the girls employed in the foundry lived near by, and had been used to working long, hard hours in factories of some sort for years. Still—Jim herself had been on a not exactly soft job for quite a long time.

"T'ersn't no woman's job," that pouring (jealous Sims whole-heartedly endorsed the words of the veteran), but they are doing it, and extremely well too. Verily, they are qualifying not merely for Paradise on

Earth, but for something more—Peace Everlasting.

As for Jim, she heeded not the reasoning voices of the Guv'nor, the veteran Overseer, Sims the Overlooker (after all, she was less trouble than them other lydies over the work! especially when there was a "rush"), the girls (who were really quite fond of her), Auntie, or of any other kind councillor. Though they all told her what a "dreadful" place she was going to, she exchanged a nine-hour shift in the Whitechapelle Finishing-shop for a twelve-hour day (varied by a twelve-hour night, alternate weeks) at a vaster (though not more interesting) Hive of War Industry still farther down the "sad shores of Acheron." As she was now used to hard work, she decided she could manage the longer journey to and from the studio.

She did not consider the "Second Experience" as nice as Dante found Purgatory after Inferno; really, she had not had a very big dose of the latter whilst working with the Whitechapelle foundry girls, and there is always present a Power (not unlike Overlooker Sims) who insists on "h'equalising things h'up, like."

However, she works hard towards ending the war, and thus also (*vid* "the sphere of fire" and her own wilful way) reaching the Emyrean.

But this is merely Canto I. divining the Comedy; or, in the plainer words of a present-day Bard—"That's another story."

AEROPLANES IN WAR.

BY T. F. FARMAN.

THE correctness of the indications relative to the military capacities of aeroplanes, which have at various times been given in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' has been demonstrated by the events of the war. That fact must be regarded as all the more remarkable, because those capacities were underrated in France, where, before the outbreak of hostilities, the vast majority of military men scoffed at the little aerial craft, and because in Great Britain the army did not, when war was declared, possess more than eighty avions. At the present moment both the French and British armies, to say nothing of those of Italy and Russia, have thousands of aeroplanes and thousands of pilots, whose services have become absolutely indispensable. It is no exaggeration of their importance to say that if the air services of the two countries had not been developed with marvellous rapidity and success, the military situation would have worn a very different aspect from what it does to-day. No one knows exactly how much money the Allies have spent in building their aerial fleets, training the pilots and observers, and providing the necessary army of mechanics; but it is asserted on good authority that the expenditure of the British air service amounted in the two first years of the war to over £40,000,000.

That of the French Aviation department was certainly not less.

On the very first day when, after tearing up the "Scrap of Paper," the Kaiser ordered his troops to enter the neutral territory of Belgium and invade France from the north, the enemy's aircraft opened the eyes of the French and British commanders to the real importance of the aeroplane in war. The German aeroplanes, far more numerous than the French avions, were masters of the air, and there is no inconvenience in admitting to-day that their constant flights over the French and British armies soon had a demoralising effect, which was all the greater because the Allies' aviators were conspicuous by their absence. The German airmen, finding themselves unmolested, flew not only over the battlefields, but over the whole region surrounding Paris and farther south, photographing all the defences, and on several occasions, in the months of August and September 1914, dropping bombs on the French capital. The foe's overwhelming superiority in the air did not, however, last long without being contested by both the French and British aviators, who had however to confine themselves almost entirely to scouting and regulating the fire of the artillery, because they did not possess

between them more than half a dozen bombarding aeroplanes or avions armed with a mitrailleuse.

Before the end of the first three months of 1915 the Allies' aviation pilots and gunners commenced showing their superiority over their adversaries. What may be called the first battle in the air was fought near Altkirch in Alsace on 16th March. Three Aviatik machines swooped down on two French aeroplanes, whose evident intention was to destroy a railway bridge. The battle at once engaged in had lasted about half an hour without result when the French, receiving reinforcements from Belfort, manœuvred so as effectually to bar the retreat of the enemy. At the same time some of the French avions succeeded in rising over the German machines, which were wrecked. Whether the aviators manning the defeated aircraft were all killed is unknown, but there is no doubt that the three German machines fell almost perpendicularly to the earth and were thus destroyed.

But the raid on Cuxhaven had already, three months before, by its fantastical and weird complexity, foreshadowed what aerial warfare was destined to become in the future. The history of that raid is too well known to require repeating, but it is permissible to note with great satisfaction that, after dropping bombs on the enemy's war vessels and arsenal, the seven brave British airmen who accomplished that memor-

able feat escaped safe and sound from the jaws of death. Three of them succeeded in reaching the British destroyers awaiting their return, three others unable to do so were nevertheless taken on board a British submarine, which diving brought them in safety to their starting-point, and the seventh who had lost his way in the fog was ultimately picked up in the North Sea by a Dutch trawler.

Those two events may be said to have marked the turning of the tide in favour of the Allies in so far as the mastery of the air is concerned. It is true the Germans created various new and improved types of aeroplanes, but each of them was soon met by a yet more perfect machine of French or British invention. Also the organisation of the Allies' air services was vastly improved, whereas both the building of new aircraft and the organisation of their aeroplane department would seem to have occupied the attention of the Germans less seriously than the construction of Zeppelins and the organisation of their lighter than air services. That they were scarcely well inspired in acting thus has been proved abundantly by the results of the repeated Zeppelin raids over England, and by the loss of the mastery in the air, which has now passed undeniably into the hands of the Allies. Though it would be absolutely incorrect to say that the German aviators always beat a hasty retreat when they met a French or British avion,

it is nevertheless remarkable that their scouting avions now rarely penetrate over the French or British fronts, but generally confine themselves to the observations they can make from over the country occupied by their troops. That is why the duels in the air are so often fought not even over "no man's land" but over or behind the enemy's lines, where the Allies' airmen have to go to find them, and which accounts for the constantly repeated announcement that the German aeroplane "fell behind the German front." Also the official *communiqués* mention nearly every day the bombardment of this or that spot of military importance, often situated at a long distance behind the enemy's front. In that manner the Allies' aviators have wrecked or seriously damaged ammunition dépôts, bridges, railway stations and lines, trains conveying troops, aerodromes, &c., and have decimated troops on the march by dropping bombs on them, or by firing on them with their mitrailleuses, whereas the enemy seems incapable of retaliating efficaciously.

To preserve that superiority over the Austro-Germans, the Entente Powers, and especially Great Britain and France, cannot make too strenuous efforts, because their aerial forces, heavier than air, will continue to be one of the principal factors in victory. To do so it will not suffice to continue to construct hundreds and thousands of avions of different types, each adapted for the performance of the ser-

vices it is destined to render, but also to continue to train an ever increasingly large number of pilots. Though it is not absolutely correct to affirm that an almost unlimited number of machines can be built in a comparatively short time, it is perfectly sure that it is impossible to form good aviation pilots as quickly as avions can be constructed for them. It is of the utmost importance to "intensify," so to say, the instruction given to the young men who enter the air service, and to give them the opportunity to gain experience by daily flights, and even to "play pranks in the air," as it was formerly called; because a man who can do little more than keep his machine on an even keel and veer round with prudence must necessarily be at the mercy of a hostile aviator thoroughly master of his avion, and capable of pouncing down on him almost perpendicularly, veering round about him in little more than double the length of his avion, ascending with great rapidity, &c., to say nothing of looping the loop in case of need.

The aerial attack on Essen made by Captain Beauchamps and Lieutenant Daucourt was undeniably a most remarkable feat, especially as virtually the whole of their flight, there and back, was over the enemy's territory. The risks the brave aviators ran of being attacked by an overwhelming hostile aerial force were immense. Without wishing to

disparage in any way their performance, it must be admitted those risks were out of proportion with the material harm the celebrated aviators could, with their limited supply of bombs, possibly inflict on Krupp's "Kolosal" beehive, extending over many square miles. The loss of two such perfectly experienced pilots as Captain Beauchamps and Lieutenant Daucourt would have been not irreparable, because there is no such thing as a necessary man, but most deeply to be regretted.

Considerable astonishment had been expressed that aerial raids such as those made last year on Carlsruhe, Treves, Pechelbronn, Dillingen, and Saarbruck had not been multiplied in 1916. Many good reasons could have been adduced for the abstention, and among them the fact that the bombarding machines did not exist in sufficient numbers. To make a really serious aerial attack on an important military centre, manufactory of war material, ammunition, &c., the success of which would cripple the enemy, hasten his defeat and the end of the war, it is not a couple of avions, or even a dozen, that must be sent on the errand, but fifty or more. And if the last raid on Essen meant anything, it was an indication that the Allies are at last sufficiently prepared to think of undertaking such enterprises.

The aerial attack on the Mauser rifle and ammunition manufactory, situated at Obern-

dorf on the Neckar, by a squadron composed of over forty avions, of which about half were French and the other half British, on 12th October, was a very serious undertaking. Though not stated in the official *communiqué*, it is known that all the machines reached their destination, and between them dropped 4340 kilogrammes (9548 lb.) of projectiles on the Mauser establishments. The alarm having been given throughout the country, the Allies' squadron was naturally attacked on its return to France. The exact number of French and British aeroplanes that failed to reach home, after their most remarkable and successful exploit, has not been stated; but it was officially announced that six of the German avions, which sought to bar the route to the return of the raiding aeroplanes, were wrecked. Of course the Germans refrained from making any statement concerning the damage done by the aerial bombardment, but it must have been very considerable. A few days before, in the night between the 9th and 10th October, the Boche magneto factory at Stuttgart had been bombarded with good effect by two French aviators. On 22nd October twenty-four French avions dropped 4200 kilogrammes (9240 lb.) of projectiles on the iron-works at Hagondange and Puissinges (north of Metz), and on the railway stations of Thionville, Mezières-les-Metz, Longuy, and

Metz-Sablons. The same day another French aerial squadron bombarded an important ammunition dépôt at Mons-en-Chaussée, in the department of the Somme. In the night between 22nd and 23rd October an operation of aerial bombardment, undertaken against the Rombach factories and the railway station of Mars-la-Tour, was most successful. On 23rd October eleven British aeroplanes bombarded the Hagondange iron-works with 1300 kilogrammes (2860 lb.) of projectiles, causing the outbreak of several fires. The aviators noted the havoc wrought by the French aviators the day before.

These few examples of the bombarding operations performed by the Allies would suffice to demonstrate that the French and British aerial forces have been greatly developed. It is no exaggeration to affirm that the mileage flown, and the formerly described "acrobatic feats" performed by both British and French aviation pilots in France, to say nothing of the doings of the Allies' aviators in Russia, the Balkan peninsula, the Arabian desert, &c., in one week, surpass all that achieved by the aviators of the whole world in the twelve months preceding the outbreak of the present hostilities. There are, however, other facts showing that, what was also predicted in 'Blackwood's Magazine' long ago, concerning the participation of aeroplanes in battles, has been realised.

"As usual, the aviation ser-

vice supported the infantry very efficaciously," is a phrase constantly repeated in the British and French official *communiqués*. The importance of that announcement can scarcely be exaggerated, any more than that of the fact that, when an unexpected lull occurs in the battle, it is generally attributed to the atmospheric conditions—especially fog or thick mist—preventing the airmen from locating the enemy. "No avions, no fighting," has become a common saying in France. A striking example of the participation of aeroplanes in infantry attacks is furnished by the French official *communiqué* of 15th October. It says: "In spite of the clouds, at no more than 300 metres (984 feet) above the ground, and an intense curtain and machine-gun fire, sweeping the space between 200 and 300 metres (656 and 984 feet), our avions co-operated most efficaciously in yesterday's combats on the south side of the Somme. They surpassed everything that could have been expected of them. One of our machines returned to its base riddled with more than two hundred bullet-shots. On the north side of the Somme two of our pilots, flying low, attacked the enemy in his trenches with their mitrailleuses from a very short distance." Another French official *communiqué*, dated 27th October, says: "One of our pilots, flying as low as 100 metres (328 feet), attacked, with his mitrailleuse, a column of artillery on the road leading from

Conflans to Etain. Those drivers who were not killed or wounded took to flight, abandoning their teams."

The writer has declared above that, in his opinion, an aerial fleet of at least fifty avions should be employed for an attack on Krupp's manufactory, but it must be understood he considers that number a minimum, and that he is convinced the aerial fleets of the future will be composed of hundreds or thousands of aeroplanes. And unquestionably all the pilots employed in such an enterprise as an attack on Essen should be not only brave heroic soldiers ready to die for their country if need be, but men of proved ability and experience in the air. The British and French aviation corps comprise a large number of first-class pilots whom the French have nicknamed "As" (aces or trump cards). Every man is placed in that category after he has, in single combat with hostile aviators, brought down at least five German or Austrian aeroplanes. At the present moment the list of "As" does not reach fifty, but there are certainly more than a hundred, probably several hundred, British and French pilots equal to the task of making a long aerial raid over Germany, especially as the bombarding fleet of avions would probably be escorted and protected by a certain number of "avions de chasse" (extra swift fighting aeroplanes), each of which should be piloted by an "As." Certain experts however contend that the bombarding fleet of avions would

not need an escort. Indeed they insist on each bombarding aeroplane being provided with either a mitrailleuse or light cannon, and being manned by two persons—a pilot and a gunner. A fleet of even so few as fifty machines thus armed would, it is believed, be able to repel any aerial force the enemy could hurriedly assemble to attack it. The foe could not concentrate beforehand an equal or more powerful aerial force to combat the invaders, because, even if he were informed of the imminence of an aerial invasion, he could not know at what point the blow was to be struck. Moreover, if a fleet of fifty bombarding aeroplanes seems formidable at the present moment, it may be possible in a very near future, and perhaps even now, to arm and man a fleet of a hundred or more bombarding avions. But of course the enemy may ere long be in a position to do the same thing. That undeniable possibility will naturally be always in the mind of those men who, in France and Great Britain, are responsible for the maintenance and augmentation of the superiority in the air which the Allies of the Entente Powers now possess.

The bombarding aeroplanes now in the hands of the British and French air services cannot be called the acme of perfection, but they are certainly better than those in the possession of the enemy. Each of those composing a bombarding fleet should be able to transport two men (the pilot and the gunner), essence and oil, for a

flight of an hour in excess of the time required to cover the distance to be flown, a mitrail-leuse with its ammunition, and at least a quarter of a ton of bombs. A fleet of fifty avions could therefore drop a minimum of twelve and a half tons of explosives on a given spot, situated at a long distance on the other side of the German frontier. Even supposing half the bombs went wide of the mark, six and a quarter tons of explosives would certainly produce an effect disastrous for the enemy, even if the place attacked was an immense factory such as that at Essen. But it would be unpardonable if half the bombs should be wasted, because the tactics employed would surely be a rapid descent of the bombarding fleet to within two or three hundred metres (656 or 984 feet) of the spot to be aimed at. It stands to reason, and has been demonstrated by experience, that it is more difficult to hit an avion flying at a low altitude on a zigzag course with an anti-aircraft gun, than when the machine remains at an altitude of 2000 or 3000 metres (6560 or 9840 feet). The difficulty of pointing the gun and firing quick enough to hit the mark is naturally increased in proportion with the shortening of the distance between the gun and the object aimed at.

It may, however, be taken for granted that the great improvement which has been effected in military aeroplanes of all descriptions during the hostilities will be surpassed before the end of the war, unless it is

brought to an abrupt termination by the central European Powers unexpectedly acknowledging their defeat, and accepting the terms the Entente Powers are determined to impose on them. It may perhaps not be entirely needless to remind the reader that the bombs employed on the French and British, and indeed German, aircraft are, in proportion to their weight, in some respects much more powerful than those used by artillery. They consist in simple shells just strong enough to contain the explosive, and are divested of the mass of metal required in ordinary bombs to resist the force of the explosion in the cannon destined to hurl them against the foe. Dropped from a great or low altitude the effect of the aeroplane bomb is the same, because its destructive power depends on the force of the explosion, and in no way on the weight of the metal containing the explosive, or on the velocity with which it hits its aim.

Aeroplanes propelled by two or more powerful motors, and capable of transporting an even heavier load, have been built and put into service in the French army. They have, however, been discarded, for many reasons, amongst which the most serious is perhaps the difficulty of synchronising the working of the engines. The only aeroplanes propelled by more than one motor still in service in France are those driven by low-powered rotary motors. The difficulty of synchronising the

working of such engines is much less serious. Moreover, in the case of the rotation of the propellers being slightly different, its importance is much less great than in the case of high-pitched propellers driven by powerful engines. Nevertheless inventors should not abandon the idea of creating multiple-engined aeroplanes capable of carrying heavy loads, and of consequently being able to undertake extremely long non-stop flights. Such machines might not only render signal services in war, but also in times of peace.

Aeroplanes have with every succeeding month of the war become the more and more indispensable eyes of the commanders, and, above all, of the artillery. To supply the large number of machines required for that service of aerial observation was the first duty of the aviation departments of France and Great Britain. It was performed by both of them with greater rapidity and success than might have been anticipated. Then came the invention and construction of avions de chasse and other fighting aeroplanes, which now

permit of the aerial forces of the Allies participating in battles—not only by dropping bombs on reserve troops in the rear, but by using their mitrailleuses against the enemy either advancing to the attack or retreating. The construction of great numbers of bombarding aeroplanes was commenced later. That was probably inevitable, though few men would, with the experience gained by the war, contest the assertion that the existence and intelligent use of big fleets of bombarding avions would constitute a perhaps decisive factor in the war.

The revolution which the aeroplane is operating in war may be likened to the taking of the Bastille at the commencement of the French Revolution. What has already been achieved indicates the immense development which war in the air is destined in a near future to receive, just as the suppression of the aristocratic citadel showed the irresistible force of the popular movement which transformed the institutions and administration of France, and influenced the future of the whole civilised world.

MESOPOTAMIA.

A KINDLY turn of fate transported me early in June from the sweltering plains of India to Quetta, that delightful spot on the mountains of Baluchistan; and as I sat luxuriously on the Club verandah and revelled in the soft warm sunshine, my thoughts turned to those less fortunate fellows I had left in the plains of India, before whom lay months of heat, hard work, and monotony.

My day-dreams were, however, destined to be short-lived, for great things were afoot in far-away Mesopotamia. Daily bulletins brought news of victories and advances. Men one dined with on Monday would on Tuesday be running the gauntlet of that fiery journey across the *Put* of Sindh to the port of Karachi; and it was not long before I too was caught in that flood, and found myself being whirled through clouds of dust in the mail to the seaport.

Little news as to the climatic conditions of that seemingly remote land had come back to India, and the average Englishman's conception of it was that of a vast desert of sand, waterless and treeless, subject to violent dust-storms, and not unlike parts of the Punjab and Sindh.

It seemed advisable to probe deeper into this matter, and I beguiled the monotony of the rail journey to Karachi by studying such literature on the subject as I was able to collect.

Chance brought before me the following description of Mesopotamia by that experienced traveller David Fraser: "July, August, and September are months in which poor humanity exists by sheer mental effort alone, and when there is no hope for a fainting spirit. But in October comes a change, for the desperate heat begins to merge into a pleasant warmth. November is cool, and in December people sit by the fire-side and almost hanker for the summer, for the air is cold and raw. In March there is no more thought of fires; in April begins the hot breath of summer; May and June are bearable; and then once more the humid, enervating, suffocating heat of July."

As regards Basra itself, he says: "Its European inhabitants only remain alive during the day through a perception of the humour of their situation, and by night through the agency of the prayers of their despairing relatives. For Basra has the most malarial air, the most choleraic water, and the most infernal climate of any spot in the world outside Tophet."

This was not cheerful reading, but which of us can really picture conditions from a description however good; and it seemed to me in that railway carriage, hurtling through clouds of dust and sand, in a temperature of some 118 degrees, that I had touched the

rock bottom of discomfort, and David Fraser ceased to have any fears for me.

At Karachi one had little time to think. The port was full of bustle and haste. Troops and officers, guns, carts laden with every conceivable kind of war equipment, motor-cars, ambulance waggons and what not, moved in a steady stream towards the docks; and it was not long before I found myself on the deck of the steamer heading for the Persian Gulf.

The next few days, until we entered the estuary of the great river of Mesopotamia—the Shatt-el-Arab—were not unlike any other sea voyage in tropical waters, and we were fortunate in having a head wind all the time, so that we looked at each other and smiled, feeling that David Fraser had needlessly frightened us, and that Mesopotamia could not after all be the bogey he conjured up. Then at early dawn one morning, when a few laggard stars still hung in the vault of heaven and the eastern sky had hardly begun to pale, some restless spirit, peering through his glasses, saw the land, and startled those of us who lay on the deck by exclaiming, "Why, the place is full of trees, and no desert at all!" In an instant all were hanging over the ship's side with glasses levelled at the distant shore. Here was a surprise for us! Surely the skipper had missed his way, or Fraser had not travelled here. Surprise gave place to wonder with every mile we travelled, and then, as the shores grew

nearer and the sun topped the horizon, we gazed on a landscape that could hardly be surpassed. Both shores of the river, right down to the water's edge, were densely clothed with the tall, graceful date-palm, vines trailed from tree to tree, the scarlet pomegranate peeped in the undergrowth, and pink and white clusters of oleander dipped over the water's edge.

For ninety or a hundred miles we steamed up the bosom of this mighty waterway. Clear blue sky overhead, a soft cool wind in our faces—for the *shimāl* had set in earlier than usual,—grassy banks as green as any on the Thames itself, and myriads of palms swaying gently in the breeze, casting deep reflections in the water, left the impression that here was the Land of Promise.

At intervals some great tributary, such as the Karûn, would flow down and mingle its waters with the great Shatt-el-Arab; and countless creeks, as wide as the Thames at Richmond, would at intervals spring on one's vision as we steamed past, and open to one's gaze fresh vistas of palms and shadows stretching out towards the horizon until lost in their own sinuous curves. There was a general feeling of exhilaration and surprise. This was not what we had looked for. Here was no desert but a luxuriant garden, and we wondered where the desert could be.

The captain of the steamer—a genial Scotsman, who had steamed over the world's great

waters until the war called him to these lesser voyages—soon enlightened us, however, by inviting us on to the bridge. From here one's gaze stretched over the tops of the palms and beyond, and we realised that the tropical luxuriance was confined to the water's edge. The palm belt was but a couple of miles wide, and beyond lay the desert, flat and silent, losing itself in the skyline fifty or a hundred miles away.

At noon the great ship cast anchor in mid-stream opposite Basra. The *shiml* had died down, and we began to realise what the Mesopotamian sun meant.

The shore, with its square yellow-brick structures—many but recently the trading houses of the Germans—standing amongst the palms, looked inviting, and we made haste to land. Temporary wharves supported on wooden piles had been erected along the river frontage, and innumerable country boats, heavily laden with their freight from the steamers, either lay up against these wharves or struggled to find berths, their Arab crews, scantily clad or wholly devoid of clothes, shouting and gesticulating, and calling down the vengeance of Allah on those who elbowed them out. Hundreds of men and women toiled in the scorching sun unloading the multitudinous things that an army needs. Dotted about and jostled by this seething crowd, one saw the Britisher directing and guiding and producing order

out of the seeming chaos. White men these, turned to the colour of mahogany by the sun, with shirt-sleeves rolled up to their elbows, large sun-helmets and spine pads, their khaki uniforms glistening almost black with the sweat that oozed from every pore.

With difficulty our little boat threaded its way through this tangle of river craft, and at last we stepped on shore.

We at once realised that David Fraser had painted with no fanciful brush. A few feet of dry frontage, and beyond one great swamp covered with green scum and festering vegetation, exuding odours that could not be matched in any part of the world. Through these swamps stretched the roads laboriously constructed by our engineers in encasements of corrugated-iron sheets and planks.

Some shade there was, for the palms grow close, but little comfort from that in an atmosphere saturated with moisture, where the thermometer registers 120 in the shade.

With sunset came some relief, and the early morning air brought refreshment. But the sun wakes early in this land, and one bestirs one's self very early to get through the day's work, for it is wise to be under shelter and lightly clad before he has gathered his full power.

And so the long weary days of toil in the mornings and afternoons, and much groaning of spirit in between, would pass from week to week.

BASRA.

The native town of Basra, as distinct from the European quarter which fringes the river shore, lies two miles from the river among the palms, its farther end touching the desert. A wide unmetalled road, known as the Strand, connects it with the European quarter, and runs alongside the great Ashar creek, which, besides being the main channel of communication between the river and the town, is the main sewer.

Twice a-day the Shatt-el-Arab rises with the tide from the sea, and twice daily the creeks, and the innumerable irrigation channels they throw off to water the date lands, are filled. When the tide is in, the creeks are gay with *belems*—the small river punts, gaily painted, with their white awnings for protection from the sun—and all the world that is on business or pleasure bent moves along these waterways. It is this that has stimulated some one to call Basra the Venice of the east. But when the tide is out, and the creek has but a trickle of water running between sloping banks of fetid mud, the wise man takes a cab, and with handkerchief to nose urges his *arabanchee* to greater speed. The cabs, or *arabanas* as they are called, are the derelicts of Bombay and other Indian towns. Rickety and almost springless, they sway and clatter over the corrugated roads. The driver, whose

only notion of driving consists in waving the reins and plying the whip unmercifully, is utterly regardless of the ruts and holes that the road is full of. His ambition is to get there. The comfort of his passenger is no concern of his.

The town of Basra is not unlike any large native town in India, and the Arab trades with the same phlegmatic inactivity. Seated on his mat among his wares, fanning himself with a palm fan, he will show little or no desire at all to persuade the passer-by to buy his goods. If his happens to be a sweet-shop, flies and hornets are his chief customers, and these trouble him but little. They have been with him and his ancestors for generations, and he hardly notices their presence. When they are too persistent in their efforts to crawl into his eyes or preen themselves on his lips, he will languidly brush them aside; but he does not mind how many crawl over his bare arms or legs or face, seeming hardly to realise that they are there.

Some of the larger streets and market-places are roofed over with date matting, and the sun's rays only trickle through. The air lies heavy and immovable, and pregnant with noisome odours of every description. There are colonies of Jews and Christians who cluster together, each with his own kind, in the better parts of

the town. These affect a Western civilisation, and deck their walls with pictures and ornaments, and their windows with lace curtains, and in the evening one will see their wives and daughters sitting on balconies languidly fanning themselves.

It comes as a surprise to one to hear that there are theatres. I was persuaded to visit one of these. We sat on the roof with the stars above us, for it was the coolest place, and looked down on the stage through clerestory windows. There was a primitive representation of a stage, and a few smoky kerosene-oil lamps did service for footlights. The audience consisted for the most part of melting Arabs, Bagdadis, Syrians, and Ethiopians, who sat in moody silence smoking the inevitable *jiggara*, the native cigarette.

Presently the cretonne curtains of blatant design were drawn aside, and the orchestra, who were also the actors, struck up a melancholy tune, while a lady of Bagdad, in a hybrid costume, half Oriental and half European, rushed out from the wings and treated us to an exhibition of a dance which fairly took our breath away. This dance, I might say, has recently been banned by the authorities in Egypt. Then one of the orchestra would burst into a rhapsody of song, and intoxicate himself with the passion of his own words; then would follow another dance and song, and so the first part of the programme

would drag its weary length along until the city gongs without struck twelve.

Throughout the performance Arabs carrying great urns of coffee or cans of ice-cream, and clattering saucers of brass like cymbals, would walk between the rows of seats shouting persuasions to the audience. The Arab, who is a great coffee-drinker at all times, would enter into a loud argument with these vendors, and finally coin and coffee would change hands. Meanwhile the orchestra would scrape away at its fiddle and twang its guitar, and the prima donna would strive to drown all other sounds. The second part of the programme consisted of a farce in which the audience took no mean part. Sallies of wit flashed from stage to pit, and since flowers are scarce, biscuits or sweets were the tributes of approval bestowed upon those acclaimed. No tickets are sold and no seats booked. One walks in and sits anywhere, and all through the performance an official, for all the world like a Bedouin brigand, wanders about collecting whatever the audience is disposed to pay. The white man is muloted of three rupees; the native at his elbow tenders four annas, which are accepted with equal grace.

In August and September the dates begin to ripen. The *shiml* has long since ceased to blow, and the sun has now reached the zenith of his power. Life is difficult to support, and

daily one hears of heat-strokes, and the little cemetery on the creek is fast filling with British lads.

Far away on the desert men are living in deep dug-outs, and convoys bring their quota of sick and wounded to the hospitals. Steamers continue to arrive from India, and now there is talk of an advance. Things have begun to hum; there is an accession of energy plainly visible; all are working at high pressure, and as each reaches his limit of endurance and falls out, another steps into his place and carries on. The river steamers are being got ready, with barges lashed to their sides. Stores and ammunition for advanced bases on the Euphrates and Tigris are being shipped, cars are being armoured, airmen are practising morning and evening, troops and horses and transport leave daily, and each of us wonders if it is to be his good fortune to march with the Army into Bagdad. But all cannot go, for there is much to be done at the base, and I find I am one of those who must remain behind. The days drag on. It is the end of September, and good news has come down the river. General Townshend has taken Kut - el - Amara, capturing 1153 prisoners and 14 guns, and the Turks under General Nur-ud-Din are in retreat. Then there is a period of silence, and we wonder how our gallant force is faring. There is some comfort in the knowledge that the extreme

heat has passed. It is early November, and the nights are growing chilly. The Arab has been very busy for weeks gathering his harvest of dates. In his eyes this is the most important of all things, since it really is his main and almost only source of revenue.

More good news now reaches us. Azizyah has been captured. The Commander-in-Chief and his staff have gone up to join the victorious army, and we chafe at our own inactivity; shall we ever get away from Basra, we ask ourselves. A week or two passes, and there are confused rumours in the air: some have it that we have won a great victory, that we are entering Bagdad itself; others, better informed, look grave and are silent. It is not a time for talk, but the story has reached the Bazaars. General Townshend has indeed won a great fight at Ctesiphon, but his casualties have been very heavy, and the Turk has been strongly reinforced, and we are in retreat, fighting a rearguard action as we fall back. Then comes the news that our force has reached Kut-el-Amara and is invested, and the Commander-in-Chief and his staff alone have managed to reach Basra. There is one grain of comfort, however, for 1300 prisoners taken by us at Ctesiphon are paraded through the streets of Basra: tangible evidence, this, that our small force had given good account of itself.

Ugly rumours are afloat that there is unrest in Basra. The

Arab freebooter Ajamie with a large following is said to be on the desert near Basra contemplating a raid. We are depleted of troops and times are anxious, but the Britisher keeps a firm upper lip and the Indian has a stupendous faith in the White Sircar. Reinforcements are already on their way, and we shall see. Anxiously we

await the arrival of these reinforcements, and at last the transports begin to arrive. Basra is once again tense with activity. Men and guns, foot and horse, transport and supplies, are being hastened to the relief of our comrades both by route-march and by river, and it is my good fortune to join them.

THE MARCH.

It is a perfect day. The desert is as level as a billiard table and firm under foot. The echelon swings along at a fine pace—cavalry, infantry, guns, ambulances, ammunition wag-gons, transport and followers, stretching for miles along the plain. Ahead and on both flanks cavalry patrols are on the alert, for one never knows what the Arab tribesmen may be up to. It is true they have never loved their Turkish masters, but great efforts have been made to get them to regard this as a holy war against the infidel. At midday a halt is called, preferably by the side of some creek, and while the animals are being watered the men sit about in small groups and are soon busy prizing open tins of bully beef with their jack-knives. The Indian too sits, as is his wont, with his feet tucked under him, eating his "chupatties" that he has baked overnight. Officers for-gather, mess boxes are unladen from mules, and there is much good-fellowship and camaraderie. Then pipes and cigar-ettes are lighted, and officers

move about among their men until the whistle sounds for the march to be resumed. At sunset the camping-ground is selected, and in a few minutes the air rings with the sound of picketing; tents spring up in orderly rows with surprising rapidity. Sentries and pickets are posted, and the smoke of a thousand camp-fires floats lazily upwards. By nine o'clock dinner is over; fires and lights are extinguished, and the tramp of a sentry or an occasional "who goes there" is the only sound that breaks the silence.

Before sunrise the camp is astir again. There is a heavy mist from the river and tents are dripping with the dew. Once again a thousand hammers tinkle against iron pegs. Men rush about striking camp, horses are saddled and transport-laden gun-teams are being harnessed; a hasty breakfast eaten as one stands in the chilly morning air, some hot tea or cocoa, and long before the earliest of the city dwellers has stretched himself in bed the echelon is on the march again.

KURNA.

Some forty-five miles above Basra the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates combine to make the great Shatt-el-Arab. In the angle of their junction stands the old and dilapidated town of Kurna. Here it was that at the end of May General Townshend with those gallant troops beleaguered in Kut fought and defeated six battalions of Turks, capturing 1770 prisoners and 17 guns, and sinking the gunboat *Marmaris*. But Kurna, according to local tradition, has far greater claims to fame than this, for it is said to be the cradle of the human race. Here Adam and Eve wandered, and here grew the tree of the forbidden fruit. The inhabitants still cling to the tradition, and will point out the site of the garden of Eden, which, alas! now boasts of nothing but the ubiquitous palm and a few dwarfed fig-trees. There is, however, in the market-place a tree common enough in India, but of its kind the only one above Basra, and Thomas Atkins has identified it as the tree of Scripture, and named the square on which it stands "Temptation Square." Here small Arab boys sell cigarettes, dates, tinned fish and fruit, to Tommy as he marches through, and do a thriving trade—which perhaps suggests that the tree has not quite lost its efficacy.

Excellent fishing is to be had at the confluence of the

two rivers, and those whose lot has established them at this point on the line of communications beguile the tedious hours with rod and line. The Euphrates salmon, *chaboose*, will turn the scale at 40 lb., but is a poor fighter and soon begins to sulk.

From Kurna we continued our march along the Tigris—a few miles and the belt of palms on both banks of the river comes to an abrupt end, and but few palms are met with after that until Amara is reached. Heavy rain had fallen recently, converting the track we followed into a veritable quagmire of the stickiest and most slippery clay that one can imagine. Marching was no pleasure now, but real hard work. Men and animals would constantly slip and fall, and fatigue parties had to be told off to unload packs and help the mules on to their feet again; great masses of clay would adhere to men's boots, increasing in size with each step, and only breaking away with their own added weight. There were marshes and creeks to be forded where the water would at times rise to one's waist. Biting winds and frost had taken the place of the phenomenal heat of July and August, and the discomfort of marching in wet boots and trousers needs to be experienced to be realised. Added to this was the discomfort of having to bed down for the

night on ground sodden with the rain, and to scramble into one's wet things in the morning when the pools by the wayside were frozen, and so to march for hours through mere puddle and marshes. Few villages were met with, but whenever our route brought us near one the inhabitants would flock out with eggs and fowls for sale and cigarettes of the most fearsome brands. Some of us had run out of smokes and were driven to sample these,—well, you can't expect much quality when you pay three farthings for a packet of eight.

The country between Kurna and Amara, a distance of seventy-five miles by road, presented nothing of interest,—flat, treeless, and almost devoid of scrub as far as the eye could reach. The villages were mere wigwams of reeds, from which would emerge slatternly women and dirty children, most of whom would be suffering from ophthalmia or other diseases of the eyes; a few lean dogs would be nosing round the refuse-heaps, contesting the spoils with the village fowls and chickens. A

primitive people these, living on eggs and the milk from their sheep, and bartering these for flour or dates or coarse cotton cloth with the boatmen as they sailed down the river.

Twenty-five miles from Basra this monotony of the desert was broken by a grove of palms growing along the water's edge, above the tops of which protruded the blue-tiled dome of the tomb of Ezra. The tomb is in excellent preservation, and has been a place of pilgrimage with the Jews for hundreds of years—indeed the Rabbi claims that his ancestors have been its guardians for two thousand years. A few Arab hamlets lie up against one of its sides, and there are ruins of brick houses and courtyards testifying to a departed glory and the fanatical assaults of predatory Arabs from the marshes. The Turk, on his retreat before us from Kurna, is said to have vented his spleen on the holy shrine, as is evidenced by the marks of bullets; but he was in too great haste to do it much damage.

AMARA.

Ten days' march from Basra brought us to Amara, 120 miles from our base. This is a town of some pretensions and a big trading mart—a sort of half-way house between Bagdad and Basra. It is situated in the fork of the Tigris and a wide canal,

regarding the history of which I was unable to discover anything. The streets are wide but unmetalled, and there are no side-walks. The drainage and sweepings flow down the middle of the streets, and are sometimes successful in finding an outlet into the river or

canal. There are some fine brick buildings along the river front, not unlike those one sees at Suez or Port Said, several of which had been commandeered by us for hospitals and offices, and much had been done to improve the sanitation of this part of the town; but it would want all the waters of the Tigris to flow for many days over the native quarter and purlieus of the town to purify it of the dirt of generations.

The rest-camp lay across the canal, and snipers and thieves would keep our sentries on the *qui vive* all through the night. The Arab is perhaps the most expert thief in the world: naked and oiled, he would, on all-fours, evade the most vigilant sentry, and enter the camp and steal rifles or whatever he could lay his hands on. Such was the experience of our echelon: and some who had gone up before us, and others who came after, fared worse than we did.

We halted here for a few days to rest the animals and men and to refit, and took the opportunity to replenish our mess stores. Everything one wanted was obtainable except tobacco, and report had it that the dealers had hidden away their stocks as a protest against an attempt made by the authorities to regulate the exorbitant prices they had been charging.

The rain had ceased, and the last few days had been bright, so that we marched in some comfort when we moved

on; but the weather broke again three days after we left, and once more we floundered through oceans of mud, and had our camps on sodden ground.

Our route now lay through country covered with thorny scrub, the rain and sun had brought up the grass, and the landscape was less monotonous. The Pusht-i-Kuh mountains in the distance on our right, with their higher peaks capped with snow, grew more distinct with each mile that we traversed, reminding one of the great barrier of Northern India as seen from the plains of the Punjab. Almost every night we would be disturbed by snipers and rifle-thieves, and at times a hot fusilade would be exchanged between them and our sentries; but we were more fortunate than some who had marched up before us, and profited by their experience. I heard of an unhappy officer whose boots and trousers were stolen from his tent on two consecutive nights, and, as he had not made provision for such a contingency, he had to march in tennis flannels and rope-soled country shoes, and this through mud ankle-deep. The more determined of us, therefore, slept in our trousers, and used our boots as pillows.

Six days after we left Amara we arrived at Ali-al-Garbi, one hundred and eighty-two miles from Basra, and camped on ground that had been used by previous echelons, and was now not much better than a bog. But there was no

alternative, for we were now in hostile country, and trenches had been dug by our predecessors round the perimeter of the camp, and it was well to take advantage of these. The weather had cleared again, and by scraping away the puddle and throwing up the flaps of our tents so as to let the sun get in, we managed to make the best of it. Our *mahelas* (country boats), laden with rations and supplies for the column, would be towed up the river each day by their Arab crews, and be moored to the bank opposite our camp each night. These boats had passed through many vicissitudes,

and indeed it was wonderful that they were at all able to keep pace with us, for owing to the tortuous nature of the river's course they had to encompass many more miles, and frequently would not arrive at camp until midnight or later, and would have to be ready to start again before dawn. But the river Arab is a stout fellow and a patient toiler. Towing a boat twenty miles or more up-stream has no fears for him.

At Ali-al-Garbi we were some twenty miles in a direct line from the battle front, and it was here that we first heard the dull booming of our heavy guns.

SHEIKH SAAD.

Two days' march from Ali-al-Garbi brought us on to the battlefield of Sheikh Saad, where we had some three weeks before fought and defeated the Turk. It did not want any one to tell us what had happened here. The plain was littered with empty ration tins, derelict carts, fragments of shells, thousands of empty cartridge cases, and the embers of camp fires. The Arab had slunk down from the hills, when our force had marched on, and disinterred those who had fallen in the fight, and stripped them of the clothes they had been buried in, and the plain was dotted with the corpses of friends and foes alike. The Arab is no discriminator. To him the Turk and the Britisher are both in-

truders: in any case there is loot to pick up on the battlefield whichever side wins, and he slinks down from his hills or out of his marshes in the darkness of night and takes what he can find. The Turk likes him no better than we do, and it was commonly said that the Turkish Commander actually suggested to us a week's armistice, so that together we might wipe out this pest that murdered the wounded of both sides with an utter impartiality whenever the chance came his way. In fact, it actually occurred in one engagement that the Turks and we turned our guns for a brief space upon a horde of some ten thousand of these freebooters who hovered in the distance waiting for darkness

to set in and the opportunity it would afford.

During this day's march we had a somewhat exciting experience. The column had halted for the midday meal. Draught animals had been outspanned and pack-mules unladen and led away to the Tigris to water. Officers and men were seated here and there busy with their sandwiches and tinned rations, or talking and smoking, and there was little to suggest that it was not peace manœuvres we were engaged on. Suddenly a trooper from an advance picket came tearing in to report that a large body of enemy horsemen were bearing down upon us from the direction of the hills. In an instant the alarm sounded, and men rushed to arms, while officers, with their field-glasses levelled in the direction indicated, anxiously scanned the horizon. In the far distance appeared a great throng of horsemen, far flung across the plain, galloping madly towards us with their loose sleeves and voluminous

kabas flying in the wind. This looked serious indeed. A laager was quickly formed, magazines were charged, machine-guns took up position, and men took what cover was to be found. A scouting party was sent off in the direction of the enemy, and with our eyes glued to our glasses we waited in tense expectancy, expecting every moment to hear rifle shots ring out. Then to our amazement we realised that our scouts had met and passed through the leading ranks of the enemy, and still galloped on. A little farther and they halted and signalled back "Nothing in sight." It was just a trick of the mirage, which has a way on these vast plains of producing the most extraordinary effects.

That night we camped opposite the village of Sheikh Saad, six miles from our destination, having marched two hundred and seven miles along the desert from Basra. The next morning we marched into Orah.

ORAH CAMP.

Orah, named after an ancient canal which takes off from the Tigris, was the farthest point up to which the relieving force had now reached. A city of canvas had sprung up here and stretched for miles along both shores of the river. A pontoon bridge had been thrown across the stream, and the river was alive with *mahelas*, tugs, and paddle steamers. It was only

by the most stupendous efforts and sacrifice that the force had got thus far, for the weather had been vile beyond description for the past two months; transport had been inadequate and comforts wholly lacking. The Turk had put up a stubborn fight and sullenly dug himself in as near as possible behind each position from which we drove him. The urgency of

the beleaguered garrison had entailed continuous effort on the part of our forces, and battles had been fought in torrential rain and freezing gales over bogs and through marshes, and men had lain down to rest in puddles, soaked to the skin. But the will to conquer was there, and at last the Wadi had been reached and crossed, and now the Army camped to rest and await reinforcements, for our casualties had been heavy. General Townshend had found stores of grain buried under the floors of Kut, and the urgency of relief had grown less pressing.

The Wadi is a tributary of the Tigris some twenty yards wide, and at low water runs between vertical banks twenty or more feet high. It has its source in a marsh at the foot of the Pusht-i-Kuh mountains, and is subject to violent floods, when it will rise with great rapidity and top its banks. It enters the Tigris on its left bank. From the right bank of the Tigris a little way below the mouth of the Wadi the Orah canal takes off. The camp was, therefore, often spoken of either as Orah Camp or as Wadi Camp. The country here is as flat as a cricket-field, and there is not a tree to be seen in any direction, although there is a certain amount of low thorny scrub.

The heavy rains in the mountains had now begun to influence the Tigris, which rose daily. The Wadi was within a foot or two of its banks, and it was soon evident that we

would be flooded out unless a "bund" was thrown up round the camps. Later, indeed, the Tigris rose above its banks, and it was only our artificial barrier that kept the flood out. At one time we were actually living on ground below the level of the flood. When it is realised what an extensive area so large a force needed to camp on, some idea can be had of the labour this "bund" involved, and much of the work fell to the fighting troops. The Turk had dug himself in on both sides of the river, his trenches on the left bank resting on the Tigris on one side, and on the Suwaikieh marsh on the other. This marsh is some twenty miles in length, and extends from above Kut almost to Wadi, and is several miles in width. The position was known as the Hannah position, and was within a few thousand yards of the camp, so that when we and the Turk treated each other to a strafe their shells would at times fall into our camp. February and March were spent in a desultory bombardment of each others' trenches, or in running saps into no-man's-land and extending our trenches nearer to his first line. On the right bank of the river the Turkish position lay farther up-stream, extending along a series of sand-hills from the Tigris to within five miles of the Shatt-el-Hai, so forming the base of a triangle of which the two rivers were the sides and Kut the apex. February and March were very wet months, and

fierce gales would blow down the river for days, and then with no appreciable cessation the wind would veer round to the opposite quarter, banking up the waters of the Tigris and lashing them into fury so that the river would swirl and leap and heave like a troubled sea.

Life in shallow dug-outs and trenches—for you cannot dig deep in a water-logged country—was at these times difficult to support and severely tested human endurance. Those who lived under canvas regarded it as a luxury, even though the floor would be wet with “seepage” and the rain would beat in, and one brought in great masses of wet clay on one’s boots when one entered, for there were no roads where the mud was not ankle-deep—some of them might almost have been regarded as tributaries of the Tigris. It was no uncommon sight to see officers and men caked with mud up to their thighs, and there was no difficulty in knowing who had slipped and fallen. As for the horses and mules, their trials exceeded anything one can imagine. Picketed in the open, they would stand in pools of liquid mud; and often it was necessary to feed them by hand, for there was nowhere to place their fodder except in the puddle in which they stood—at night they would just have to lie and roll in six inches of slush. Fortunately, there would come days of sunshine, and the ground would rapidly dry, and all would be busy then cleaning the mud off

boots and uniforms, and scraping the caked clay off the animals. Hardly would this be accomplished when a gale would spring up, the clouds would blacken the face of the sky, and it all had to be gone through again. On these days one would shiver in a British warm and wear mittens, and when the sun came out men would work in their shirt-sleeves. It is a land of strange contrasts. In early February the desert lay brown and scorched,—not a vestige of green anywhere,—and by the end of the month it had blossomed into a meadow of rich green, for a few days of sunshine after the rains make the grass spring up almost in a single night. It was now possible to graze animals, and thousands of horses and mules would be seen pasturing in the confines of the camp. Armed escorts had to accompany them on such occasions, for the Arab hangs about to seize an opportunity for a quick raid, and, indeed, on one occasion a party of them succeeded in carrying off some mules and their drivers to captivity in the mountains. This was the men’s own fault, but one does not like to dwell on the lot of those unfortunates.

Almost daily steamers would arrive from Basra with supplies or reinforcements, and the mails were looked forward to with great eagerness. The camps were very busy in these latter days of February and the early days of March. A constant stream of traffic flowed across the bridge. Aero-

planes would start out each morning to scout over the enemy's positions to collect material for the making of maps, for of this theatre of the Great War no previous maps existed; boats would be unloading; troops marching this way and that to their allotted camping-grounds; convoys would be loading up supplies and ammunition for the troops stationed on the desert; thousands of men would be working with pick and shovel making the "bunds" round the camp or digging trenches; bombers would be practising morning and evening. Then "Fazal," the Turk, would fly over in his Fokker to see what we were getting at, and our guns would turn their noses up at him and our maxims bark furiously. At sunset every day the *Mantis*, with her 6-inch guns, would split the air with her roar, and clouds of dense black smoke would rise against the setting sun, showing where the Turk lay. The nights, too, would be lively with the constant rattle of carts and the exchange of rifle fusilades from the trenches and the frenzied stuttering of machine-guns.

And so the days passed until early in March, when everything pointed to an advance. But again the weather intervened, and there had to be a postponement, and our souls grew sick within us. Would this rain never cease? However, it cleared again, and in the silent hours of darkness a great host of armed men—

horse, foot, and guns—stole silently across the vast desert to attack the extreme right of the enemy's position. At day-break our batteries opened fire, and high-explosive shells and shrapnel burst like a torrent on the Dijilah Redoubt, and to those who saw it, it seemed that nothing could live in this tornado of lead and iron. Another division at the same time bombarded the Sin Ahtar Redoubt, two and a half miles away on our right, which formed the middle defences of the Turkish line of trenches, stretching for seven or eight miles to the Tigris. Later, the infantry sprang to the assault, but there was much dead land without a vestige of cover to be passed; and although some small parties were successful in entering the redoubt, they were unable to hold their position against the counter-attack of the reinforcements brought up by the Turk. At sunset another attack was launched, but proved unsuccessful, and the force withdrew and bivouacked for the night on the desert.

During the night the wounded were collected and attended to, and at daybreak the force started on its return to Drah, fifteen miles away. The attempt had failed, but no one was dispirited—we would try again. But what must have been the feelings of those poor fellows in Kut, half starved as they were, for we had got to within eight miles of Kut, and the sound of our guns must have been plainly audible to them.

The rains had now ceased and the days had begun to grow warmer, and the earth was covered with a rich mantle of grass. But daily signs of the approaching hot weather became only too apparent. The sand-grouse began to migrate, and myriads of them would fly over our camp heading for their breeding-grounds in the North. The black partridge would fling out his challenge at sunset, and the air would be alive all day with the song of the lark as he soared into the heavens, just as he does over the meadows of England. Wandering away from camp when the guns were silent one could fancy oneself back in some English meadow, for the desert was carpeted with clover and daisies and buttercups.

There was little or no fighting during the rest of March, although at night there would be continuous and heavy rifle and machine-gun fire from the trenches, and at times the marsh Arab would creep up to the outskirts of our camp and treat us to a lively fusilade until driven off. A fresh Division had now joined us, and feverish preparations were on foot for another attempt, for news had come from Kut that we must make haste. The garrison was reduced to extremely slender rations, and had eaten all their horses and mules. Our aeroplanes had for some days been flying over the town dropping such supplies and medical stores as they could carry, but it was evident that

the gallant defenders were starving, and the hospitals were full of sick and wounded.

On the 29th of March all was ready, and then the next day the rain came down again in torrents. I find a record in my Diary on this day: "Still raining and blowing half a gale—infernal weather for tent life—my tent flutters and flaps like some demented thing. Awoke at midnight; heavy firing in the advance trenches; compared to the lot of those in the trenches, my dug-out with its canvas awning is a paradise indeed."

Then followed some bright days, and on the 5th of April the advance commenced. The day was heralded by a terrific bombardment of the Hannah trenches by scores of batteries. It was still dark when the guns opened fire, and the sky was illuminated with the flash of thousands of bursting shells. Surely nothing could survive this. Presently the barrage lifted, and our men leapt from their trenches, and in twenty minutes the position was won. It was found to have been but lightly held, for the Turk had apparently anticipated what was afoot, and had silently cleared out the major part of his force to a position a few miles in rear. Here we met with strong opposition, but our men were not to be denied, and by sunset the Fallahiyeh position was ours. We had progressed seven miles, but now the battle front was much constricted, owing to the encroachment of the Suwaikieh marsh, and was

hardly a mile wide. The Turk had also flooded his front, and a triple line of trenches bristling with machine-guns now faced us. An attack on these trenches failed, and in the succeeding days, up to the 25th of April, our efforts were directed against the Turkish positions on the right bank of the river. Here we gained some five or six miles of the enemy's territory, capturing several of his outlying trenches and inflicting heavy losses on him; but we were finally brought to a standstill opposite his main position of Es Sin, which now extended from the Tigris to the Shatt-el-Hai.

Our casualties had been mounting up, and our force was much reduced in numbers. We had been fighting for twenty days on end, and it was borne in upon us that we had shot our bolt, and could do no more until fresh reinforcements should arrive. But what of Kut? They were at the end of their resources, and if they were to hold out until reinforcements arrived food must be got to them. The fastest steamer of the river—the *Julna*—had for some days been under preparation at Basra. Two thousand tons of supplies were loaded in her, steel plates were riveted to her sides, and a gallant band of heroes volunteered to run the blockade with her. No one there but knew that the enterprise was in the nature of a forlorn hope fraught with the gravest dan-

ger. The chance of her succeeding was one in a thousand, for she would have to run the gauntlet of the Turkish trenches which debouch on the river at Sanayat,—at Bait Asia,—on both banks at the Es Sin, and finally a triple row round Kut itself. The river now being level with its banks, her funnels and superstructure, and even her hull, would stand out clear against the sky.

In the East it is impossible for anything to be kept secret, and it was known to many, two days before the *Julna* arrived, that the attempt was to be made.

At dead of night on the 25th she slipped her cables and stole up-stream. Thousands of anxious eyes were turned in her direction, and tense ears listened to the thrash of her paddles. Heavy with her load, the engines had to use their utmost effort to battle against the rushing flood, and whether it was the sound of her paddles or that information had been conveyed to the Turk, one cannot say. Our guns strove by their din to distract the attention of the Turks, but the fates were not kind, and she was discovered a few miles from Kut. Her gallant Commander was killed, and our airmen brought the news next morning that she was a captive of the Turk.

And so we had played our last card. The next few days were days of gloom and depression, and then on the 29th came news that the garrison had capitulated. I have heard

strong men, who had cheerfully for months borne every kind of hardship, and faced death almost daily, say that they felt inclined to weep. All this sacrifice had been in vain, and our heroic comrades, British and Indian, were on their way to captivity.

Before us stretched months of torture from the blazing sun on the open desert, in confined trenches with no head cover. Cholera, too, had broken out in the Turkish trenches, and the corpses of the victims of this fell disease floated daily down the river, polluting its waters. Orders were issued that all drinking-water

must be boiled, but fuel was scarce, and sun-scorched men cannot wait to slake the agony of a desert thirst. Myriads of flies swarmed everywhere, and, straight from the sun-blistered corpses on No-man's-land, would invade our trenches and battle for food even into one's mouth. All that was humanly possible to tide over the horrors of the summer was done, but resources were limited, and many a British lad lies on the desert of Mesopotamia. But all things have their end, and at last October with its cool weather is at hand.

EXPERIENCES OF A V.A.D. AT DUBLIN CASTLE
DURING THE REBELLION.

It was shortly after noon on Easter Monday, April 24. I was washing bandages in the Supper Room Kitchen, when a man came in, and, as I thought, said, "Come quick and look. There is a fire in the Castle." I went into the Anteroom and looked out of the window, but as I saw nothing of interest, returned to my bandages. In a few minutes he came back. "You must come and look! They are firing on the Castle!" The Anteroom is really the drawing-room of the Controller's house, and is on the left side of the Square, facing the Lower Yard, and at right angles to the Front Gate, so we could not see much; and as hospital is a place where punctuality reigns supreme, I went back to lay the lockers for the men's dinner.

Then came great excitement. "The policeman at the Front Gate has been shot, and they have carried him in!" The Sister on our landing was summoned and rushed downstairs, while speculation began as to which policeman it was. It turned out to be the nicest, such a dear, with grey hair and twinkly eyes; he always used to salute us when we passed in uniform, and just grin when we were in mufti.

It was now clear there was going to be trouble. The patients' blood was up, and they wanted to be out and in it, but

of course this was impossible. Large numbers were at the windows when the policeman was carried across the Yard, and the women, who accompanied him, shouted, "You call yourselves soldiers, and you won't come out and help." It was very unkind, for the men were dying to go, and it hurt.

When the men's dinner was nearly over, Sister came back. She had been helping to tie up the policeman, but there was no hope; death had been instantaneous. She confirmed the rumour that it was our favourite; she said she could just recognise him, though the upper part of his face was destroyed. Then one of the nurses came in, very flushed and excited. She had been off duty for two hours that morning, and had heard rumours of trouble while she was out. On her way back she said to the policeman at the Gate, "Is it true that the Sinn Feiners are going to take the Castle?" "No, miss," he answered, "the authorities are making much too much fuss about it"—and before she had crossed the Yard and gone in at the door, he had had his brains blown out, and was lying dead on the ground.

The men, who were watching from the windows, said an armed body marched up Cork Hill to the Gate, and shot the policeman through the head. The sentry, who had

only blank ammunition, fled into the Guard Room. The Sinn Feiners took the keys and looked the gates.

We heard afterwards that the original plan had been to seize the Castle, as they had done the G.P.O.; and many reasons were advanced why they had not done so. Most people thought it was due to a misunderstanding; that some of the Rebels had gone to a wrong place, and the remaining number were not strong enough. Connolly, however, told us that when they found no resistance, they thought it must be a trap to entice them in and ambush them, and that Ship Street Barracks, at the back, would be too strong for them. One of the soldiers told me there were only seventy raw recruits in the Barracks, and no ammunition there at the time. I think one of the nurses summed up the situation when she said, "Somebody was praying for us."

When the men's dinner was finished and the ward tidied, I ran into the Sterilising Room to see what was happening at the back. A troop of soldiers had arrived, and were drawn up in the Barrack Yard. The heavy solid gates were closed, and also shut across, with a sentry at each peep-hole. Outside, instead of men with bayonets, were a few small children, staring with open mouths at the massive gates! Rifle-shots were heard at intervals, but we could not see where they came from, nor where the bullets went.

At First Dinner there was a general atmosphere of unrest. Conversation flagged, though a few people kept up constant questions—chiefly asking if we had seen the policeman's helmet in the hall, and the holes made by the bullet in it. Suddenly every one jumped up and ran to the window which overlooks the Barrack Yard—but it was only the soldiers drilling. There was a noise of people rushing down the corridor, and the sisters ran out to see if they were needed. Several times during the meal stretchers passed down the corridor outside, and each time we asked the same question: "Killed or wounded?" and some one came in and said "Dead" or "Very bad."

My only conscious sensation at the moment was a burning desire to go out and have a shot at the Rebels myself. Instead, I remarked prosaically to one of the V.A.D.'s: "It does not look much like the theatre to-night!" She and I were to have gone with friends, including her brother. "Hush!" she said, "don't suggest to any one that it would not be safe; it will be all right by then, and we must go." I promised not to put the idea into any one's head, but I had my doubts—and I knew she was not thinking of the theatre at the time, but wondering how big the outbreak was, and if her brother, who was on the Staff, would be in danger. Next morning she showed me a note from him — "Kingsbridge Station. All well; bullets flying"—

from which we gathered the trouble was fairly widespread.

We could not cross the Yard to our rooms after dinner, so I took a tour through the Picture Gallery and Throne Room, where all windows were thronged with spectators. The Throne Room faces the Front Gate, and from there I could see that the Gate was locked, and guarded by Rebels, I think, in National Volunteer uniform. Otherwise things looked much as usual; men passed up and down Dame Street; only rifle-shots rang out at intervals. "Look! you can see the sniper; watch the roof of that house," said one of the men next me. Presently something popped up on the roof—a puff of smoke—bang! I had seen a bullet fired to kill!

When I came back to the Supper Room I found a nurse in great agitation. "I was nearly killed!" she exclaimed. As there did not seem any immediate danger, I asked how. "I was leaning out of the Sterilising Room window, and a bullet whizzed right past me—look at the mark on my apron!" She pointed to a rent, which I was convinced had been there all the morning, and tactlessly said so. "Well, it passed very near me anyway," she protested, "and I got such a fright."

Between 3 and 3.30 P.M. an officer and a policeman passed

through, greatly excited. "We have shot two of the leaders, and are on our way round to the other side of the hospital, from where we can shoot a third."

Another officer and a Tommy came up and mixed with the crowd in the Throne Room, so that they could see without being seen. They soon began firing through the window—probably at the sniper I had seen earlier in the afternoon. I was horrified to see the wounded men standing all round; for if the sniper spotted where the shots were coming from, he would no doubt return the compliment. This apparently occurred to the soldiers afterwards, for they turned every one out of the ward, and locked the doors. The firing continued the whole afternoon.

Before the soldiers started firing from the Throne Room window I saw Rebels come into the Yard, look round, and go out again. The men, who were watching, said they unlocked the Gate several times, came in and fired on the Guard Room, and went out again. Rumour said there was a large quantity of ammunition in the Lower Yard, which was their objective. The gates between the Upper and Lower Yard were closed, but although there was no guard the Sinn Feiners showed no inclination to force them.

II.

About 5 P.M. troops arrived. Yard when I first saw them, They were lined up in the so I do not know which gate

they came through. We did not know what regiments they were, nor where they had come from. I had to take the temperatures of the men sitting at the windows, which gave me an opportunity to look out; but beyond the lines of troops, nothing of interest seemed to be happening.

Presently there was a stir of expectancy. We all waited breathless, and round the corner came the milkman rolling a big can! He was greeted by cheer upon cheer from the windows, as no one had thought there was any prospect of the evening's milk arriving.

There were a few sentries on guard, their bodies well behind cover, only their eyes peering round to look through the Gate; and any one crossing the Yard had to run across the exposed strip opposite the Front Gate. The first definite movement I noticed among the troops was when an officer and a number of men collected near the Gate; they were lined up, and he gave orders. At a signal he and two or three of the men ran towards the Gate and disappeared from view; three or four followed, and so on. This turned out to be the famous charge on the City Hall—of which more later.

By this time many of the men were tired watching, and came back to the ward; and for the first time, or certainly more vividly than ever before, I began to realise what France had meant to them. One could hardly believe they were

the same men who had been there in the morning. They were not excited as I should have expected; their faces were white, with horror and repulsion written on them; all their cheeriness was gone. I heard many of them say, "We're in Hell again, we might as well go back to France"; and others said, "I am so frightened, I am going home to-morrow." It was not fear; but the noise which reminded us of reviews and military tournaments, told them a very different story. They saw again their friends being killed, and all the horrors they had tried to obliterate from their minds.

We had been sent a message: all blinds were to be pulled down and all lights turned out, and to be prepared for noise, as machine-guns were going to start. We groped round in pitch darkness, unable to see who was who, so it was hopeless to try and do anything—and then the guns began. Such a noise! It was well they had warned us. It was quite unlike any firing I had heard before, and varied from a rifle much as a cinema differs from a photograph. We comforted ourselves with the thought of the last of the Rebels' heels, and that in a few moments our seven hours' excitement would be over, and we should return to the *status quo ante*; but it was not long before we began to be undeceived.

The folding doors between the Supper Room and the Anteroom were shut across

with some difficulty, so that our lights could be turned up again without being seen from the Yard. At the front of the hospital they were busy. Partly because of light, and chiefly because of danger, the beds had to be moved from the Picture Gallery and Throne Room to St Patrick's Hall, the corridor of the Officers' Quarters, and the landing outside, which were at the back of the house.

The back door of the Supper Room Kitchen faces the Operating Theatre, and as both doors were open, I could see inside. In the middle of the floor a man was lying on mackintoshes in pools of blood; all round were wounded being stitched up, or having hæmorrhage stopped.

A V.A.D. who had finished her work in the Still Room came upstairs and asked, "What can I do to help? Couldn't I do anything in there?" and she pointed at the Theatre. I suggested they seemed already to have more nurses than patients; but if she really wanted to be of use, to come in and talk to the men, who were fearfully strung up: so we did.

I think I talked to most of the forty men that night, but some I remember more clearly than others. A man who was crippled with rheumatism, was ashen white and lying with wide unblinking eyes and an expression I had only seen in moments of extreme pain. "I wonder what will happen to us all?" he asked. Nothing could happen that was not

meant to, I answered; even his rheumatism had been allowed so that he might be sent to the Castle to cheer us up. He laughed at that, but said it was right, he did not believe in chance. There was a man with splinters of shrapnel all over him, who had had a leg amputated; he was the only person in the neighbourhood alive after the shell had burst that wounded him. "Well, if they break in," he said rather bitterly, "they can get me anyway, for I can't run away." The battle outside sounded by no means reassuring, but it was not likely this man had had such a miraculous escape to meet his fate at the hands of rebels. Another had had an operation on his arm three days previously, and, without leave, had jumped out of bed and spent most of the day at the window. Now he was lying back in bed, his face drawn with pain. In the next bed was another rheumatic victim, who was so much better he was able to go for long walks in Phoenix Park. That night he looked as ill as when he first arrived, and said the pain was as bad as ever. I fetched his lotion and rubbed him for about ten minutes, till I had to go and look after a new patient. I do not think it did him any good physically, but the attention improved his spirits. The last man stamped vividly on my memory, was one who had had an operation about a week before. He had not been out of bed since, but he too had got up without leave that afternoon to see what was going on.

About 9 P.M. I noticed him in his dressing-gown, dragging one foot wearily after the other in the direction of the Ante-room. (They could still look out of the windows in the dark.) Such a thin, white, tired face! "You must go back to bed," I ordered. "Please not just yet." "Yes, at once; you look worn out, and if you go now I shall go down and tuck you in." This was most successful; they are like children, and love being tucked in. "Well, I wanted to look out of the window," he said; "but I'll promise to go in five minutes if you will tuck me in then." So we compromised. When I went down to fulfil my part of the bargain, I found him in a very bitter humour. "I should like to get every one of those Sinn Feiners and torture them, and then turn machine-guns on them"; but he was not so cold-blooded next day, after a good night's rest. I made him promise to try to go to sleep; and he never moved again, though the lights were full on and the bustle continued for another two hours.

The four empty beds in the ward were filled by men wounded that evening. The first was the man I had seen lying on the floor in the theatre bleeding so profusely. A few details about him may be of interest. He was a sergeant in King Edward's Horse, and took part in the charge on the City Hall. Behind him was a recruit, only just joined, who knew next to nothing, and in the excitement forgot almost

the only thing he did know—how to carry his bayonet. He held it too low, slipped, and thrust it into this man's hip. The doctor said if hæmorrhage had continued another five minutes (which was quite possible, as he was rescued under fire) his case would have been hopeless. As it was, he lost a fearful amount of blood: I did not think it was possible for a man to look so white. He was quite conscious; his eyes would follow us round and then shut again; he could talk—a few words at a time in the merest whisper—chiefly to the effect that his wound was nothing! When we lifted him to settle the pillow his head dropped over, showing how weak he was. We gave him drinks of water; it was the first time I had seen what cold water can mean to a wounded man, but I was to see it often again that week. I suddenly remembered that once, after my leg was burnt, I blessed my sister for a cup of tea, and asked if it could do him any harm. "Very good for him, if you like to make it," was the reply; and how he loved it! It would not have seemed any trouble to have gone to India and grown the tea for him at that minute, I was so afraid he was going to die. Unconsciously I found myself saying, "So this is War!"

The other three men were not nearly so ill. One was a South African, also in King Edward's Horse, who had been wounded in the arm; and another in the same regiment had a splinter of metal, about twice

the size of a pin's head, in his left eye. The last arrival was a man invalided home from France with dislocation of the knee joint, and now it was out again.

A message brought me round to the other side of the hospital, where I found the beds in the corridor had been filled, and some of the new arrivals looked awfully bad. One, I specially noticed, with his head bandaged; his face was a bluish colour, and with his eyes shut he was answering questions mechanically as to his name and home address. What happened to him I do not know; if he lived, he looked a different person next time I saw him.

It must have been well after 10 P.M. when one of the men asked me if I had had anything to eat. I had quite forgotten till then that we had had no supper, but I was not hungry. Next time I went into the kitchen he produced a nice little pot of fresh tea, and lovely fingers of hot buttered toast, he had made for me. They looked really appetising, but I had only time to taste them: he sat over them like a watch-dog, and every time I appeared had them ready for me to take another bite.

About 11 P.M. the man with dislocation of the knee was carried in. When he was comfortably in bed, with hot jars and a good meal, I stayed to talk to him for a few minutes. I was interested to hear he was in the 4th Hussars, and in-

quired for several friends in that regiment who I heard were in the Yard. "Did you know Mr P——?" he asked. "He was killed out there, not long ago." I almost felt as if I had been stunned—the dream had vanished—I was up against realities. That terrible noise, which even then I had only partly begun to connect in my mind with the wounded coming in, had meant the death of a man I knew. I suddenly realised how terribly tired I was, and was very glad of the tea and toast still waiting for me.

In the kitchen the nurses, and the men who had not gone to bed, were exchanging rumours and scraps of information they had gleaned. The machine-guns had not been entirely in our favour; we had only one to the Sinn Feiners' three. The City Hall had been stormed and taken; but the 'Evening Mail' office, opposite the Front Gate, was still in the hands of the Rebels. We also learnt that the trouble was spreading, and that the G.P.O., Jacob's, and other important buildings, were strongly held.

The conference was brought to an abrupt conclusion by the appearance of the Assistant Matron. "Every one must go to bed! The fighting is over for the present, but is to begin again at 4 A.M. So off with you! Quickly!"

To run no unnecessary risks, we did not loiter crossing the Yard; but when I reached my room I looked out through a crack in the shutters. In the

Yard were two large watch-fires, about fifteen yards apart, and soldiers stood round each in circles several deep, with their hands stretched out to the blaze. One felt one must be dreaming!

III.

We undressed hurriedly in black darkness behind bolted shutters, and were soon in bed, though not in the Land of Dreams.

A jumble of thoughts passed through my mind, chiefly the adventures of the day. Civil war, so long expected and yet so unexpected, was actually an accomplished fact! One wondered how far it would spread, and how long it would last. I should have liked some news of my people, who live in Dublin; but "bad news flies apace," and it is against my principles to worry about the unknown.

I was roused from my reverie by a violent shake. "Get up quickly and put on your coat; we must go into the hospital; it is too dangerous to stay here." In spite of the truce till 4 A.M., sniping had been kept up continuously the whole night. I thought it was an official order, so reluctantly I dragged myself out of bed, put on a dressing-gown and my uniform coat. "Do hurry! It is awfully dangerous; they are firing right at our windows."

Our room was really a double one, with the partition knocked down, and had four windows, two looking out on the Yard, and two on the west side of the Castle. Op-

posite these side windows was a wall, at the top of a rise of ground, and it was from here the Sinn Feiners were firing down at the sentry, who was quite near our windows. I believe several sentries were killed there.

It was out of the question to cross the Yard. The only other way of getting into the hospital was by a back staircase, which was barricaded to prevent its being used. Our costume was hardly suitable for climbing, and the darkness did not make it easier; but we scaled the barricade successfully, and went up to the top landing. The others led the way to No. 18 Ward, exactly over the Picture Gallery, which surprised me, because it was the place of all others we had been forbidden to go to during the day. I suggested this, and asked who had sent the order; whereupon they all turned tail, and I discovered they were acting on their own initiative! We made our way down again, keeping close to the walls and dodging the windows, as the firing was very severe at that side of the house. We had to go through the Supper Room to reach the main building, and as we made our way downstairs, through an open door, I saw one of the V.A.D.'s busy washing up in the men's

dining-room: she had been on duty since 7 A.M. the morning before without a break. In the hall we met the Night Sister looking very worried, and the sight of us, with our hair in pig-tails, did not seem to afford her any pleasure: she ordered us straight back to bed!

We lay down for two more sleepless hours, and then dressed, to be ready when summoned. It was just dawn, but we dressed in the dark, as the shutters were closed and bolted. Once one of the others opened a chink, and called me to look at the sentry: perhaps he heard her, for my nose and two eyes were greeted by a cheery smile. The third girl in the room, who was on duty in the buffet, invited him to breakfast—an invitation he readily accepted.

We had not much longer to wait before we were called. The other nurses must have dressed beforehand, too, as the dining-room was nearly full when we went in,—it was the first time for some months that we had breakfasted by gas-light.

We each had a boiled egg, half a slice of bread, and a cup of tea, and then ran up to the wards. I was so relieved to find the man with the bayonet wound in his side smoking a cigarette: the effort did not last long, but I was assured he was going to live. We set to with zest at the morning's work, and everything was in order by 7 A.M. There was not much fear, however, of having to sit with our hands in our laps, as only three of us were on duty, where, normally, there

are at least double the number; but some were needed to help in the buffets, and some to open the rest of the hospital.

The sniping still continued, but the shots were few and far between. A batch of wounded might arrive at any moment, as at 4.30 A.M. we had watched the troops march out of the Yard, with bayonets fixed, followed by the stretcher-bearers.

Except for a few visitors to our men in King Edward's Horse, it might have been an ordinary morning in the Supper Room—not so downstairs! The hall was turned into a receiving station, fitted up with screens; supplies of bandages and dressings and kettles of boiling water were kept in readiness. The men's dining-room was packed, and the corridor thronged with soldiers waiting for breakfast. The crowd was so dense, it seemed hopeless to try to manœuvre my tray through; but there were cries of "Gangway! Gangway!" and a passage appeared as if by magic. Such a jolly, cheery crowd they were: one would almost have thought they liked coming up to Dublin to be shot at. From 5 A.M. till midday the crowd continued; we fed about seven hundred that day, though there were only supplies for the seventy men originally in the hospital, so we could not treat the visitors too regally. They were allowed a cup of tea and half a slice of bread for breakfast; the same for tea, and a cup of tea for supper. Practically none were able to turn up for more than two meals in the day. Our dining-room was

turned into an officers' buffet, where they could get tea, bread and jam and butter, as long as there was any.

It seemed so prosaic to have to clean the bath and kitchen when those downstairs were run off their legs; but we were affected to, for the men, who generally helped us, spent their whole day washing and drying crockery in the buffet. Another big difference was that all fifty men had their meals in the ward, as their dining-room was not available. From the first morning till sometime after the Rebellion was over the gas supply was turned off, and our stove was useless in consequence. The Supper Room and Anteroom were heated by hot pipes; there were no fires, and so all the water for tea and cocoa for the fifty men had to be carried through St Patrick's Hall to the fire at the top of the main staircase. (How I longed for my helpers who were downstairs!) Even here troubles did not end, as it was a common occurrence to go back to find your saucepan boiling finely—but with somebody's instruments sterilising in it—and your kettle empty, having been used to fill hot jars for a new arrival!

The men still had five meals in a day, but could only be spared one half slice of bread each at a meal. Sometimes it was dry; generally I was given a dish of jam or dripping each morning, and spread it on the bread myself to make it go as far as possible. There was always a good supply of meat at dinner. I think I am correct in saying it was brought

in by a gentleman in his private car, at his own risk, his only protection being a red cross on his arm. Vegetables and puddings we forgot the look of; sugar ran out, and milk had to be treated as if it were as valuable as mercury, the supply was so irregular.

We had breakfasted three hours earlier than ordinary, so were looking forward to 10 o'clock lunch with more than usual zest. It was not a healthy, open-air hunger, but an unpleasant sensation of emptiness. At 10 A.M. came the news there was to be no lunch, so there was nothing for it but to imagine we had had it.

When the men's lunch was finished there was some bread over, so we helped ourselves to half a slice each, and about half an hour later a nurse offered me a cup of tea in the Sterilising Room. There was no dinner either that day, but about 5.30 P.M. we trooped down to tea. (First Tea was most popular!) The house-keeper's sitting-room had been turned into a nurses' dining-room: its chief drawbacks were that it was very small and that it looked out on the Yard, so we had to eat our supper in the dark. From this on we had meals fairly regularly, but only four instead of five in the day. There was always plenty of bread on the table; but when one had just refused the Tommies, who were literally starving, a second half slice, one was not likely to take more than necessary. They were wonderfully generous, too, with jam; but we all knew the supply was distinctly limited,

and the Rebellion might last any length of time. Once we revelled in a tin of bully beef, sent us by one of the officers; and another time we partook with much ceremony of sardines, also a special present.

Upstairs, the man with the splinter in his eye caused considerable commotion by announcing he was going out to rejoin the fighting. His eye was much inflamed and must have been extremely painful; but he was quite determined, and nothing we could say would stop him.

Numbers of the troops came to the Supper Room Kitchen for a wash and brush up, amongst them some we had seen march out, soon after dawn, with fixed bayonets. Their objective had been St Stephen's Green, but it was found to be so strongly held it was useless to attack it; so they marched back, without adventure, leaving the Green to be dealt with by the Artillery when it should come up from the Curragh. Others had taken part in heavy fighting near Trinity College.

The Supper Room beds were all filled, so the newcomers were taken to other wards; but from the windows we could see a constant stream of ambulances and stretchers going in and out of the Yard—the dead had their faces covered.

During the afternoon the firing was intense. They said the Sinn Feiners were firing from a wall opposite, over our ward and kitchen, into the Castle Yard. I felt especially sorry for the new patients, who had friends in the thick of it.

In the kitchen the bullets seemed to be raining on the walls: time after time we looked round to see if the windows were broken, but we had a marvellous escape. There was a sniper just over us, and the whole room seemed to tremble each time he fired. A V.A.D. on night duty made desperate efforts to sleep in one of the Sir Anthony Weldon wards, facing the same direction, but gave it up, as the bullets were hitting the wall in quick succession.

In the evening we watched the men in the Yard bombing the office of the 'Evening Mail.' The noise was terrific, but eventually the building was successfully stormed. From then on, we were considered comparatively safe.

That night the watch-fires were lit again in the Yard. So many of those who had stood around them the night before were now patients in our wards, or stretched stiff and cold. One wondered with a shudder how many more gaps another twenty-four hours would make.

IV.

In spite of the noise we slept soundly that night, but felt little refreshed when we

came on duty at 5 A.M. next morning.

Wednesday, in our quarters,

was heavy with regular routine, but rather uneventful. When the K.E.H. men came up to see their friends, I tried to get them something to eat, as their off-time was so short, and they could then spend the whole of it with their friends instead of wasting time in the crush downstairs. Their visits cheered the wounded men, who were longing for the latest news.

There was a sergeant-major who came each day. He was on duty on the Castle roof, with two lance-corporals under him; but, as he was always responsible, he never slept day or night, and these flying visits were his only rest. This Wednesday afternoon he turned up again, looking worn out. I put a comfortable chair beside his friend's bed, and fetched him a mug of soup that was left from the men's dinner: he had had nothing since the scanty meal I procured for him the previous day. He was in very low spirits. He said he had been on active service before, but never such a hateful job as this, and he owed his life to nothing but the inferior soldiery of the Rebels. The night before he and his men had passed in black darkness, within two yards of where a group of Sinn Feiners were hiding. It would have been the simplest military feat to have bayoneted all three, instead of which the Rebels continued to crouch in a corner, and, when daylight came, were taken prisoner. One felt he did not expect so much luck again, and dreaded another

night in such nerve-racking surroundings. He said it was difficult to distinguish the innocent from the guilty, as almost all wore civilian clothes. One man did manage to persuade them he was a harmless spectator, till they made a search of where he had come from, and found his rifle.

It was then 3.30 P.M., and as tea had not to be ready till 4 P.M., and can be prepared in twenty minutes, the most useful way of spending the intervening ten minutes (everything in hospital must be done with one eye on the clock) seemed to be to talk, or rather to listen. I had a feeling he was going to be killed that night, he was so fearfully depressed. He told me about his home, and some of his experiences during the South African War. He had been Lord Roberts' galloper, and though orders were generally transmitted through a member of the Staff, he had seen a good deal of the General himself, and it is superfluous to add that he worshipped the very ground he walked on.

We had had three strenuous days, so, as there was no chance of new arrivals being brought to the Supper Room, we decided to try and get off duty by 8 P.M. We got through fairly well, and by 6.30 o'clock were a good deal further on than usual when the Assistant Matron appeared to tell me I was to be moved to the Throne Room. "Now?" "Yes—immediately."

I was both glad and sorry. I had been on duty in the

Supper Room for two months, and had begun to look on the men, to a certain extent, as private property. On the other hand, in abnormal circumstances, with guns firing on three sides of us, and dead and dying being carried in in a constant stream, no one who calls herself a woman could say she preferred to be shut away doing little but cooking and cleaning, however necessary.

Since the 'Evening Mail' office had been retaken the Throne Room was in no greater danger than any other ward, so the beds had been moved back. There were eight or nine men in the ward, who had been brought in the previous day—none of them were in danger. A trooper in the K.E.H., with a nasty wound in his back, which was very painful when he moved, was a special friend of the man with the bayonet wound in the Supper Room. Next him was a 17th Lancer, shot in the thigh, who was to spend the next two months on his back. A man in the Leinster Regiment knew two friends of mine, and said they had both been a good deal in the Yard; but I got very little further conversation out of him except "Yes, miss," "No, miss." A red-headed boy in the Dublin Fusiliers was equally uncommunicative for about twenty-four hours—when we managed to break the ice. There was a Sinn Féiner, the first I had seen. He reminded me of the popular picture-house villain, though probably he was an

innocent dupe, like so many of the others; but I took an immediate dislike to him, which I never overcame.

Two of the Supper Room men had followed me across, and, as the evening's work was not begun, I was most grateful for their help. It was nearly 9 P.M. when everything was straight, and I was just going down to supper when a message came that a batch of wounded was expected during the night. The Picture Gallery, which was bereft of everything, had to be put in order; the men pulled in empty beds from St Patrick's Hall and other wards, while I fetched pillow-slips, sheets, and draw-sheets from the Linen Room and blankets from the top landing. One of the men followed me faithfully round, saying, "Let me carry them for you, Nurse." By 10.30 P.M. the ward was as nearly in shape as we could make it; we could not bring in the full number of beds, as some were in use in St Patrick's Hall.

As I came downstairs a procession of policemen with bared heads passed down the corridor—it was the policeman's funeral.

Downstairs I met the Matron, who sent me into our temporary dining-room: I was not hungry, but felt nothing loth to sit by the fire. Shortly afterwards the Matron came in and told the maid to bring me some supper. She said the funerals had just passed (which I knew). I think she said there were four-

teen buried in the garden that evening, including Mr P——. I asked if he had been killed instantaneously, and she told me he died on a stretcher in the hall. She said the general opinion seemed to be that the Rebellion would end some time within a month. A MONTH! when three days had seemed an eternity! Yet we glibly talk of men having been in France "only two months."

As I crossed the Yard I heard quick footsteps behind me, and was accosted by two officers. "Is that your room?" They pointed at our windows.

"Yes." "Then you need not be afraid, because we have searched it." "You have searched it?" "Yes, we have looked in all the cupboards, and there are no Sinn Feiners hiding there, so you need not be afraid." Sinn Feiners in our room! The idea had never occurred to me; but a vision rose before my eyes of the room as I had left it before 5 A.M. that morning—the bed unmade, and everything flung round in wild confusion! Mercifully the maid had succeeded in crossing the Yard during the day and had tidied it.

V.

A few more patients were brought to the Throne Room next day, two of them Sinn Feiners. One was an elderly man with grey hair, rather a commonplace individual; the other was a shrimp. Such a miserable little specimen, about five feet, without a pick of flesh on his bones! His teeth were literally chattering with fright, and he looked "as if he had been up the chimney," which was precisely where he had been! He was most anxious to keep up a flow of conversation, but that was too much of a luxury for Rebels (time was very precious); he was brought to us suffering from exhaustion. His pitiful appearance induced me to ask why he had joined. "It was all for show; we liked parading through the streets; we were told that was all we had to do, and

I never thought of this—indeed, I never did,—and when we started on Monday morning, even then I thought it was all for show, till they suddenly ordered us to fire on any one in uniform, and then marched us off to take [I forget which particular building he had come from], and I was so frightened I went up the chimney, and I had to stay there three days, and I never got a bit to eat,—oh! it was awful! and I never fired a shot—indeed, I never did." That I quite believed, and as he stopped to take breath I made my escape. The Rebels must have been ordered to plead absolute ignorance, as it was always the same story. The only original answer we were given was: "It would take too long to tell you now why I did it; but I'm going to do twelve

years' penal servitude, and when I come out I'll tell you."

I only saw the patients in the Drawing Rooms at meal-time, and when sent to take the temperatures of the landing. The only one I remember was a boy in the Royal Irish Regiment. He had a poisoned wound in his right arm, and the doctor was afraid he would have to amputate; but in the end it was saved. He had been sniping on the roof, and boasted of having accounted for eleven Sinn Feiners at different times; but the last had nearly done for him. "If only they had been Germans, and not Irishmen,"—that was the universal wish. It was this man's second visit as a patient to the hospital. He came from France after Neuve Chapelle, and spent five months at the Castle: three of his friends, who came on the same ship, were with us still.

When I came on duty that morning I had to pass through the Picture Gallery, and was interested to see that some of the beds we had made the night before were in use. I looked quickly to see if they were serious cases, and somehow the faces seemed familiar. I racked my brains to try and think where I could have seen them before, and it suddenly dawned on me—they were the students!

During the day three of the beds received the kind of occupants for whom they were intended. All were in danger; and round each, in turn the

screens were put, while the chaplain knelt beside the bed. (A Church of England and a Roman Catholic chaplain were in constant attendance throughout the week.) One of the men was shot through the neck, and lay quietly with his eyes shut, except when offered a drink, which he never refused. Another was shot through a lung and the wrist; he was propped up, but looked feverish, and took no notice of any one. There was something pathetic about the twirl of his moustache, which showed he normally took an interest in his appearance. The third was shot through both lungs and the liver, and looked much the worst. He might have been any age between thirty and seventy; his eyes had a glassy stare, and his face was a queer dark colour, while he choked incessantly for breath. When he asked for milk, some one said, "Don't wait to heat it, or he will be dead before it comes." All three made excellent recoveries.

Another arrival was the first female patient: her bed was put in the corridor of the Officers' Quarters.

The officers' dressing-room was turned into a "dressing station," where slight injuries were attended to: over two hundred and fifty cases were treated here. As the room was fitted with basins, several of us had to spend all spare moments there washing bandages and mackintoshes, which, needless to say, were never-ending. The Matron had given

out that any nurse who had the chance might sit down, so I used to pull a chair over to the basin and scrub away with my back turned to every one, oblivious to general conversation: it was very rude, but I was too tired to care.

The windows overlook the Castle garden, where all day about twenty men were digging graves. The nearest were for officers, each made separately; then two large graves for Tommies and civilians, and, far away by themselves, the Sinn Feiners. There were over seventy buried in the garden: most of them were removed when the Rebellion was over, but some of the officers are there still. Only a very limited number of coffins could be obtained: most of the bodies were buried sewn into sheets. The funerals took place each evening after dark: more than

once the burying party was fired on. Towards the end of the week the dead were so many, they were brought in covered carts instead of ambulances. I saw a cart open once—about fifteen bodies, one on top of the other. It took time to carry them round to the Mortuary, and sometimes as one passed two or three bodies would be lying near the side door, dressed in khaki, but so still, so stiff, the hands so blue, and the faces covered. One wondered if they were the men who had shouted "Gangway!" that morning, and laughed and talked so cheerily.

In the evening I spared a few minutes to see my old men in the Supper Room. They greeted me as if I had come back from Australia, and it was like home to see them again.

VI.

Friday, my attention was divided between the Throne Room, where I was nominally on duty, the two Drawing Rooms, where I helped with the meals, and the Picture Gallery, where a pair of legs to run messages was always welcome.

Three more women joined the one in the corridor. Two arrived after dinner: they were aunt and niece, but neither was conscious of the other's presence. They were in their own house when a bullet came through the window and hit the girl; the old

lady, in a panic, rushed to the window to pull down the blind, and was shot also. They were very bad; the aunt only lived three or four days, and several times they gave up hope of the girl, but she eventually pulled through. They were a charming pair; the aunt was commonly known as "the dear old granny," and the niece had lovely auburn hair, long white hands, and a rare sweetness of expression. When any one went over to her bed she used to say, "Let me hold your hand; do you think I am going to die?"

Later in the afternoon I saw a woman lying on a couch with her eyes shut: I had not seen her brought in. She was one of the servants in the Metropole Hotel, and when the place was seized, she and several others were kept to work for their captors. They plotted to escape, and all succeeded, but this girl received two bayonet wounds in the leg while she was running away. She was not much hurt, however, and in the evening went down to help in the Still Room.

A few more beds in the Picture Gallery were filled. The Matron and Assistant Matron received the men themselves, there was such a dearth of nurses. I saw one of the Sisters bathe a man's face with warm water and cotton-wool; it seemed to refresh him so much, I did the same for another, with equally successful results. Next morning, as he still looked hot and feverish, I offered to do it again. "Like my face bathed?" I felt as if I had offered a child of ten a baby's bottle!

The man shot through both lungs was still awfully bad, but continued to be wonderfully cheerful. He tried to laugh once, but choked so much he had to postpone the luxury for a few days longer: he showed he took an interest in what was going on by occasionally pointing at men on the roof opposite. Once I was giving him a drink, when every one rushed to the window; he shoved the feeding-cup away: "What—what—is

it?" he gasped. I went over and saw an armoured motor just returned. The men, stepping out, were laughing—the trip had evidently been a success.

It is difficult to remember which day these cars made their first appearance, but by Friday the sight of them rushing in and out was quite familiar. It is also impossible to state chronologically the arrival of Sinn Fein prisoners. The only batch I clearly remember were fifteen or sixteen respectable-looking men, brought from the Four Courts the Tuesday morning after the Surrender. They were mostly elderly, and all but two wore red crosses on their arms. They showed more signs of curiosity than fear; but as we had heard that every man over eighteen was to be shot, we could not bear to look at them. They were marched round, and disappeared through a side door of Ship Street Barracks.

Captured ammunition was also brought into the Yard; one pile included a German officer's sword, a number of German rifles and dum-dum bullets.

The artillery rolled out from the Castle Yard to fulfil its deadly mission, and returned, sometimes within an hour, sometimes not till the evening. Fresh troops arrived from England; and, before they joined in the fighting, rested on the hard flags at the back, or the equally hard Yard in the front. Sometimes they looked so very tired.

Continual rumours reached

us that the whole town was in flames, and that even the Rotunda had not escaped: we had a fleeting glimpse of the red flare in the sky as we ran across the Yard at night. There was also news that the Four Courts had been blown up, and that Jacob's Biscuit Factory was to share a like fate. Our own basement was carefully searched by officers, lest the Rebels should have thought of dynamiting us.

Frequently, when the men were resting in the Yard, there would be a stampede, and they would stand flattened against the walls—the Yard was under fire. Some men were wounded in it and several killed.

From the windows we could see a little of the fighting behind Ship Street. Soldiers on the roof of a large red building were bombing a house to the left; for some time after it was in a very shattered condition, and puffs of smoke issuing through the gaps in the roof showed that the Sinn Feiners had not yet deserted it.

On Friday evening I was passing through the Supper Room when I saw the Australian who had had the piece of metal in his eye standing in the middle of the ward with a crowd around him. One of the group, followed by the others, ran across: "Nurse," he said, "the burning question is—can you get this man something to eat? He has had nothing for over twenty-four hours." He came to the hospital each day to have his eye dressed, but

that evening he looked more than tired, he looked very ill. Downstairs he could only be given the regulation one cup of tea, so I sent him round to visit the man in his regiment in our ward, while I went to forage. The drains of cocoa left in the various saucepans after the men's supper made two good mugfuls; it looked quite inviting when heated up, and it was nourishing. He had been too long without food to be able to eat, but promised to come to the buffet next morning for breakfast. He said that incidentally he would come up and pay us a visit before starting out for another day's adventures. The "visit," when it came off, consisted of a hurried good-morning! There had been some misunderstanding, and he and another man had been locked up in the Guard Room all day, on the charge of looting; in the evening they were able to clear themselves, and were released.

I spent another hour in the Picture Gallery after supper. Two of the Sisters were attending to a Dublin Fusilier, just brought in. He was shot through both thighs and a nerve was severed: he was in terrible agony. Afterwards we used to tease him by calling him "the hospital crock," he was so well up in how everything (that concerned him) should be done! When he was finally fixed up, Sister sent me off duty, as she said I would not be able to get up in the morning—a prophecy which came true; I did not appear

till after 6 A.M., over an hour late!

The "night fag" was greatly distressed when she found I had to cross the Yard alone, and wished to find me an escort; but, as I knew of no one bullet-proof, I thanked her and went alone.

All was dark in our room, and I groped for a bed to see if I was the first or the last. Not only was it empty, but the bedclothes were gone—nothing but a mattress! It was one thing to cross the Yard alone, but another to sleep in a house by myself,—our room was the only one in that house in use at the time. I called the other girl, but there was no answer, so groped across to see if her bedclothes had been spirited away also. The poor dear had only just gone to sleep, and it was very hard lines to be awakened immediately. The third girl had decided to sleep in another room.

On Saturday morning I met a doctor, who told me my

people were all right, as far as he knew; I did not like to ask him to tell them about me. I tried several times to send word through by stretcher-bearers, but the only news which reached them was from this doctor, whom I did not ask. He looked at me critically, and asked if I had not slept since the beginning of the Rebellion. Not very complimentary!

My spare moments during the morning were spent doing special to an elderly civilian, suffering severely from shock. He trembled so violently, the whole bed shook, and was quite oblivious of our presence, though he was able to take sips of brandy-and-water at intervals.

There was actually a pause in the afternoon, so I seated myself in front of the fire to make toast for the men's tea. One of the men relieved me before long, and made enough for the whole landing. It was a treat! It seemed years, not days, since we had seen anything so civilised.

VII.

Teas were being brought, and high good-humour prevailed over the toast, when some one hurled herself in with: "The Rebels have surrendered unconditionally!" We could hardly believe our ears; it seemed much too wonderful to be true.

The news was followed by a damper: "Thirty new nurses have arrived—what are they to eat? I should rather do twice as much again than have rations cut down any further."

We echoed the sentiment. It did not occur to us, that once surrender was official, we should be able to get plenty of food.

A new nurse and two V.A.D.'s were sent to the Throne Room; other wards received similar reinforcements, and we had the amusing and unexpected experience of tumbling over each other.

The arrival of James Connolly caused an unusual stir. From the window I could see him lying on the stretcher, his

hands crossed, his head hidden from view by the archway. The stretcher was on the ground, and at either side stood three of his officers, dressed in National Volunteer Uniform; a guard of about thirty soldiers stood around. The scene did not change for ten minutes or more; somebody gruesomely suggested they were discussing whether he should be brought in, or if it would be better to shoot him at once. It is more likely they were arranging where he should be brought, and a small ward in the Officers' Quarters, where he could be carefully guarded, was decided upon.

The nurses in charge of him acknowledged, without exception, that he was entirely different from their expectations: no one could have been more considerate, or have given less trouble. About a week after his arrival he had

an operation on the leg. He was strongly opposed to this himself, but until he had been tried, he had to be treated entirely from a medical point of view. When he was coming round after the ether, the sentry changed, and he turned to the nurse who was minding him and asked, "Have they come to take me away? Must I really die so soon?" All through, his behaviour was that of an idealist. He was calm and composed during the court-martial, and said, "You can shoot me if you like, but I am dying for my country." He showed no sign of weakness till his wife was brought to say good-bye to him, the night he was to be shot. When she had left, he saw the monks, and about 3 A.M. he was carried down on a stretcher to the ambulance that was to bring him to Kilmainham.

VIII.

At 6.30 P.M., the charm of an idle life and the prospect of a reasonable amount of sleep had not lost their first gloss, when my staff nurse mentioned a rumour that I was to go on to night duty. At first I thought she was joking, but as she really meant it, I had to find out if it were true. After some time I met the Assistant Matron with a list in her hand: "You are being changed, and are to go on to night duty I think—yes—here it is—night duty in the Picture Gallery. So run off as quickly as you can, and lie down for an hour;

you must be on duty again at 8 o'clock.

Upstairs, bustle and business ruled in the Picture Gallery. Since the firing had stopped, the ambulances could drive through the streets in safety, and a great number of wounded were brought in. About 9 P.M. the day staff retired, and left one staff nurse, one probationer, and me to look after the twenty-seven patients.

I never thought I should have seen such suffering as was in that ward that night; the groaning was indescribable. One man was shot

through the head; they said his brains were showing, and that if he lived he would be insane. He made a marvellous recovery. There was a man who had just had an arm amputated; another had his arm terribly smashed up, with a poisoned wound the size of a tennis-ball—for several days they feared they would have to amputate; another had an equally damaged leg. One had a dressing over the whole side of his face, with thick clots of blood at the edges; I heard that half his face was gone, and never passed him without a prayer he might not live. Providence was wiser than I; his face, though frightfully disfigured, was not blown away, and within a week he became one of the cheeriest men in the ward, and one of the most particular as to the set of his hair! All that night he made no sign of consciousness, except when, with his uninjured eye still closed, he fumbled for his drinking-cup, which he could only manage by a tube put into his mouth. Then there was a boy in the South Staffords, with the blue face one dreaded to see. Normally he must have been unusually good-looking, and he was not more than eighteen. Every few minutes he would sit bolt upright, stripped to the waist, and stare wildly round with unseeing eyes; and when we tried to make him lie down again, would shrink from

being touched, and grunt his disapproval. I came into the ward just in time to see screens being put round a bed—it was the first time I had ever seen the face of a dead man.

The Sinn Feiners in the ward made me feel worst of all; we still believed all Rebels over eighteen were to be shot. I had felt very stony to the ones in the Throne Room, but these were different,—they were so ill, so weak, so helpless. I could have cried, it seemed so cruel to drag them through such torture for that.

The time passed quickly, as the men were very restless; many of them needed their dressings changed, and all wanted their pillows turned and a drink at least every five minutes; most of them needed injections of morphia. About midnight some of them showed signs of quieting down. The staff nurse discovered I had been on duty since 6 A.M., so she made me sit in a big chair by the fire, and promised to tell me if she wanted me. When I stood up again, I felt as if I had acute rheumatism all over, and could hardly walk; it was so painful, I did not give my muscles another chance to stiffen. We had dinner, about eight of us together, at the table outside the Officers' Quarters. A memorable spread: poached eggs and bacon, plenty of bread, and our greedy eyes fixed on a dish of butter.¹

The rest of the night we

¹ I must apologise for continual reference to food, but its scarcity made it most conspicuous.

continued to change dressings and give drinks. A civilian, shot in the chest, was especially restless: it did not do him much good to turn his pillow and pull up the blankets, but it stopped his groaning for a few minutes when he felt somebody cared that he was in pain. A Dublin Fusilier near him also spent a very bad night. He had been a prisoner in the G.P.O. for several days, and when it caught fire he and the other prisoners had given up all hope of escape or rescue, but were driven out in front of the Rebels under heavy fire from our own guns at the Rotunda. This man was severely wounded in the hip, and lay out in Henry Street all night. Next morning (Saturday) a Sinn Feiner took pity on him, carried him under cover, and put a handkerchief over the wound. Late on Saturday evening he was found by an ambulance and brought to the Castle. His wound was by then extremely septic, and he showed signs of going off his head from shock.

Three other cases were of special interest. A civilian was dangerously wounded in the stomach, and was on his way to King George V. Hospital, when the ambulance he was in came under heavy fire. The driver was shot through the lung, but remained at the wheel till he fainted (he was afterwards personally congratulated by Sir John Maxwell). The R.A.M.C. sergeant in charge had his arm so badly

shattered, he nearly lost it. When he saw the driver was done for, he sent for assistance, and they were all three brought to us.

Soon after dawn, the breathing of the delirious boy in the South Staffords quickened perceptibly. Nurse, with difficulty, persuaded him to take a stimulant, while she sent for the Night Sister, and for one of the students (who came in pyjamas and an overcoat). Nothing could be done, so the chaplain was called (also in pyjamas), and within ten minutes he was gone. It seemed so tragic—he was such a young boy, and had only come from England that day; but he had died a hero's death as truly as any one on the battlefield of France.

'To claim the glory they have won,
And rise triumphant like the sun,
They have gone West.'

At 4.30 A.M. the morning's work began,—washing, bed-making, breakfasts. It took time, they were all so helpless, and though the day staff came on duty soon after 5 A.M., we did not get off till about 9 A.M.

Late on Saturday afternoon I saw the man who had had the splinter in his eye being wheeled across the yard on a bicycle; one leg, stuck out, was evidently wounded. That evening I found him in a corner of the Anteroom, but when I asked him if he was feeling better, he turned his head round very slowly and stared at me as if he had never seen me before. A nurse told me she overheard the Matron say

she was afraid it was paralysis, so we were greatly relieved next morning to find him chatting to a friend. I told him I had spoken to him several times the night before, but that he did not recognise me. "I must have been asleep," he said, so I left it at that. He had been invalided home from France, suffering from shell-shock, and must have had a return of it the night before. He told me he had been in the bombing

party at the Four Courts the previous day. He said they lost over fifty men, amongst them his special chum, who had been one of the regular visitors to the Supper Room. The dead lay in heaps, and every man who went up was killed; he said when his turn came it never occurred to him that he would come back alive. I asked if he had felt afraid. "No," he replied; "I was not thinking of myself."

IX.

When I awoke about 6.30 P.M. it was hard to believe it was Sunday, and only a week since Easter Day.

I was anxious about the men in the Picture Gallery, and was disappointed when I heard I was moved to Sir Anthony Weldon's and the Anteroom. The latter had been filled the night before, but only one or two men were left; the others had been moved into the Supper Room, and the men who were with us before the Rebellion had gone, some upstairs and some to Sir Anthony Weldon's. They expected the Anteroom to be filled again that night, but only a few more cases were brought in. The men in Sir Anthony Weldon's were almost convalescent, and slept like tops; and there was only one serious case in the Anteroom. He was another of those brought in the previous evening with a blue face, but the blue had given place to a sickly yellowish brown: he

lived only till the following Tuesday.

Early on Sunday morning orderlies from King George V. Hospital appeared on the scene. They were a great help; they used to look after the fires and make themselves generally useful. The convalescent patients, who always worked like blacks, were very critical of them. One man said to me one morning, "I have just done such a dreadful thing. I bumped into an orderly who had fallen asleep on his broom and woke him up—quite by mistake!"

The sniping was worse than usual on Monday night, and we heard rumours that the Sinn Feiners had reinforcements, and the surrender was withdrawn. Two men were killed in the Yard just outside our door a few minutes after I had come across.

Night duty was not without its excitements. One of the nurses going her rounds had an electric torch, which she

switched on when she entered the ward. She was faced by a burly Australian, his fists clenched and a ferocious expression on his face, just going to make a spring for her throat! He had mistaken her muffled footsteps for a Sinn Feiner. This put the idea of spies into our heads. It was not unlikely they would make some effort to find out where Connolly was, and if there was any possibility of escape. Any investigations would probably begin at our staircase, which led directly down to the cellars and basement. Early on Monday night I saw a man in mufti go into the theatre and close the door quietly behind him. At dawn the nurse who had had the fright the night before appeared as white as a sheet; she really had seen a spy this time! She was sitting in one of the small wards when she heard a noise next door; she went in, just in time to see a man in civilian clothes she knew she had never seen before go out of the other door. We told her she had dreamt it, but she was quite determined on the subject, and warned all the orderlies and guards. When the men awoke, her statements were confirmed by one of them, who said a night or two previously a man in mufti had stood there, just as she described, about 2 A.M., looked carefully round, and gone out again, closing the door noiselessly behind him. The Matron was told, and after some inquiries he was identified as the Castle detective, said to be always about, but no one had

ever seen him or heard of him before. My friend in the theatre was the man who looks after the boiler at night; I only knew the man on day duty.

When I went into the Supper Room (I had been moved back there on night duty) the man with the bayonet-wound in his hip produced a splendid box of Cadbury's chocolates, which he gave me. The sergeant-major, Lord Roberts' galloper, had sent a message that he had been moved to a different part of the town, and as he could not come over to thank me personally, he sent this as "a token of gratitude." I had not done anything to deserve it, but it was very nice of him to think of it.

After supper, next morning I had to move my belongings to the Night Nurses' Quarters. Everything was quiet, and the Yard was safe to cross. The troops were lying in all directions, and with armloads of pillows, sheets, and similar baggage, I had to pick my way between them.

When I came on duty that evening, I was greeted by the news that the sergeant-major had been in to see me; but when he heard I was on night duty, had left, with a message he would call again at 7 o'clock next morning! One of the men offered to chaperon me!

The chaperon was also on night duty. A man had undertaken to write down the name and address, and particulars in general, of each case as it arrived. This was most helpful, as it would be very import-

ant if the patient did not live, and it set the nurses free to attend to him. The man stuck to the job day and night, except for a few hours each afternoon, for nearly a week; and then, he was so tired out, this man relieved him.

The former was formally presented with a silver cigarette-case by the Committee in recognition of his services; two of the other men were given fountain pens. It must have been very difficult to decide on whom to confer the honours, as, almost without exception, every man in the hospital did more than he had strength for. One man told me the doctor said he had nearly done for himself, and several of them were put back a good deal. The shortage of food made the work still harder for them; and the first evening, they generously threw all their cigarettes to the men in the Yard, and there were none to replace them.

We were at dinner in the kitchen, when a stretcher-bearer offered us his newspaper, the now famous paper with three dates. It was the

first communication we had held with the outside world for over a week, and we nearly tore it to pieces in our excitement. Such, however, is the frailty of human nature, it was not other people's experiences which thrilled us most, but to see how vivid a picture of our adventures had been drawn for the world in general! We expected something similar to accounts of the Siege of 'Derry, but we had some difficulty in finding it. "There was a faint-hearted attack on Dublin Castle, which resulted in the shooting of one policeman." That was all! We still hoped for some recognition of the nursing world, and were not disappointed: "The civilians behaved with wonderful calmness, as also did the doctors and nurses." It was all right to put the doctors above us,—but the civilians—who, we thought, had either run like rabbits to their holes, or risked their skins for nothing but curiosity! What a meroy Providence has not shut us off permanently from the outer world, or what limits would our egotism not reach!

X.

The women had been moved to one of the small wards in Sir Anthony Weldon's, and another was added to their number. She was the head of the Sinn Fein Red Cross, and had carried all the despatches organising the surrender; she went several times with orders from "General"

Pearce to Jacob's, but failed to persuade them to join in the general unconditional surrender. The room was lit by a night light, so, except for a night-dress and two dark plaits, I saw nothing of her. She left next morning, escorted by an armed guard. Another prisoner brought in that night

had £1000 in bank-notes on him.¹

The Hospital itself presented an unusual appearance. Sentries, with fixed bayonets, sat or stood at the top and bottom of every staircase, and outside every ward in which was a Sinn Feiner; one guarded each of the doors of Connolly's room, and another was in his room. Those who were not on duty sat round the fire at the top of the main staircase, and some turned the "baths," used in peace times for palms and plants, into beds. There are two of these tanks, and about six men fitted into each, three at either end, their feet overlapping in the middle. One man looked too funny: in his well-worn khaki and muddy boots, his face and hands very dirty, he slept peacefully on a lace-edged pillow! I did not know the hospital boasted such a smart one.

On Tuesday morning we were allowed to go to Early Service, held in the Matron's office by one of the chaplains. It was in keeping with "active service." The clergyman robed in a corner of the room; the Bread and Wine were placed on an ordinary table covered with a white cloth. About eight of us attended; the men in the yard stared in through the windows.

On my way back I met Captain ——. It was the first time I had seen him, though I knew he had been billeted in the Castle.

The Boiler Room, where we filled our hot jars, was always packed with Tommies—some lying full length on the table, others lolling round. The beloved goat—I forget what regiment it belonged to—made its headquarters there, and the 4th Hussars' dog, which had come up uninvited. One morning I spoke to a 4th Hussar sergeant, who had been in the attack on the City Hall. They were met by a murderous fire, and he owed his life to the fact that he stopped to carry a wounded comrade back. He had been beside Mr P—when he fell; he turned to him and said, "For God's sake, take the men back!" It was his baptism of fire, but his last thoughts and words were for his men. The sergeant spoke of him with such genuine admiration, as they all did. He said the only thing which made it possible to bear was the certainty they were fighting Germany as truly as if they were in France. In his opinion, the Rebellion was Germany's last trump card, and would prove the turning-point of the war.

Wednesday broke warm, bright and sunny, a perfect spring morning. I had not the least inclination to go to bed, and an overwhelming desire to go home; to this the Matron consented, but only at my own risk. I was undecided when Captain — appeared: "It is as safe as possible; I have a car at the

¹ Here, as in similar cases, I can only state the facts as I heard them. I cannot vouch for their accuracy.

door if you would care to come." He had very kindly been to see my people during the day; it was the first definite news I had heard of them for nine days. His regiment had spent a most trying week; the job they objected to most of all was searching the cellars, bestrewn with wooden boxes, sacks of flour, every kind of cover for a sniper; and they were expecting to be sent to Galway to continue the house-to-house search. I fastened a red cross on to my sleeve, and turned my apron (a clean one

had not been seen for a week). The sight of the ruins gave me no sense of shock, they seemed entirely in keeping with the rest of the hideous nightmare. All shops were closed, and the streets were thronged with sightseers. It was hardly necessary to have been in uniform, but there was plenty of it to be seen, and it gave me a free pass. Captain — said it had been very unpleasant elbowing his way through the crowds, probably hostile, on his way to his sister's late the night before.

XI.

As the hospital was three-quarters empty when the Rebellion broke out, more than half the staff were on leave and could not return. There were only about thirty altogether for day and night duty, and of these seven had to be spared as waitresses in the buffets.

The Matron and the Assistant - Matron rarely took more than one hour's rest in the twenty-four, and, in addition to the responsibility and strain attached to their posts, they took the place of staff nurses in the wards when it was necessary.

The Sister of the Supper Room landing, in addition to her usual work, helped a great deal in the Picture Gallery; she was frequently called

down to the hall when a serious case was brought in, and she acted Theatre Sister. Sometimes eight emergency operations had to be run through, one after the other; and in the middle she would feel some one fumbling in her pocket for her keys, or would be asked if Smith was to be allowed any supper! In spite of all this she always found time to pay a visit to her "dowager" men, who had been moved to the top landing, and were left entirely to their own devices.

A Staff Nurse who developed appendicitis refused to give in until the reinforcements arrived. She probably saved several lives by her unselfishness, but it very nearly cost her own.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE IN WAR-TIME—VISCOUNT GREY'S RECORD
—HIS POLICY IN THE BALKANS—MISS HOBHOUSE, FRIEND OF
HUMANITY—LORD ROBERT CECIL'S CONFESSION OF INCOMPETENCE
—THE MAN WITHOUT A CONSCIENCE—PROPERTIES IN NIGERIA—
MR STEEL-MAITLAND'S ATTACK UPON BRITISH MERCHANTS—AN
IMPERIAL POLICY—MR BONAR LAW'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

IN the time of war the Foreign Office bears a weight of responsibility which it can neither shift nor share. The Admiralty, if it do its duty, supplies the Navy with what it wants, and leaves it to carry out its own plans unhampered. The Army should be responsible to its own heads for what it does and for what it designs to do. A civilian First Lord of the Admiralty or a civilian Minister of War would be guilty of a grave offence if he dared to give advice to the chiefs of the fighting services in matters of tactics or strategy. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on the other hand, must be complete master of his own policy. He can look to nobody for support or guidance. He must know the truth about many men and many countries, and though for his facts he may rely upon British agents abroad, he must still draw his own conclusions and shape his own purposes. And the natural difficulty of his situation is enhanced by the great importance which attaches to what he says and does. His wisdom (or folly) may shorten (or prolong) the war indefinitely, and we cannot exaggerate the burden which has been laid upon Viscount

Grey during the last two years.

How has he carried it? With the same insouciance wherewith his colleagues have picked up their lighter portfolios. Like them, he has waited patiently upon events. He has lived cheerfully from hand to mouth, as though we were merely playing at war. When Germany invaded Belgium, his record was already bad enough. For many a year he had tried to conceal a velvet hand beneath an iron glove. When the crisis came in Bosnia and Herzegovina, he alienated Austria without helping in the smallest degree the injured States. His attempt to force the Declaration of London upon a reluctant country proved that he had no understanding at all of the dangers which beset an island kingdom. He was quite ready to destroy the advantages which nature and a strong fleet had given us, and to confer upon our enemies the assurance of a future victory. His treatment of Germany during the years of preparation showed a lack of courage and determination which was wellnigh our undoing. The close friend and colleague of Lord Haldane, he

listened, no doubt, to that Germanised philosopher when he sang the praises of Prussia and applauded the *Geist* of his friend the Kaiser. Thus he went on, submitting to evil influences and believing only too readily what he was told. And the danger of the situation lay in this, that Lord Haldane and Viscount Grey are both amateurs in foreign affairs. Lord Haldane brought back from his visits to Berlin no more information than the Kaiser and his advisers thought fit to entrust him withal. He saw what they wished him to see; he heard what they wished him to hear; and he came gaily home to mislead the British People. To Viscount Grey we cannot ascribe even the smattering which has served Lord Haldane for omniscience. He is insular in his tastes and in his prejudices. He has served no apprenticeship abroad; he is not a Ulysses, knowing men and cities. His one creed, held with a sort of passion, is that representative Government is a cure for all the evils of humanity, and that it can be applied safely to all the peoples of the earth. We all remember the grave danger in which he involved us because he refused to believe that Egypt was not (so to say) a suburb of London, which could be kept quiet and happy by an amiable distribution of votes and ballot-boxes. And then came the war, to find Viscount Grey still without a purpose and without a policy.

It is not our intention to analyse here the famous White Book. But all those who have read it will remember that Viscount Grey refused resolutely to sketch for England a definite course of action. He would and he would not. He read the pro-German press, and trembled. He was not sure that he could carry the country with him, and his chief desire seemed to be to get it down in black and white that we were under no obligation to France. Instead of leading his countrymen, he still clamoured to be led; and had not the nation been made of harder, stouter stuff than its rulers, we should probably have remained on-lookers, until France and Russia had been disposed of, and would then have been easily demolished by the victorious Germans. However, Viscount Grey, in obedience to public opinion, went to war, and has held himself ever since as a victim of circumstances. He has been half-hearted always and uncertain. Whenever decided action has been necessary he has failed us. He has put off the hour of decision until it was too late. With nerveless hands he has clutched the reins of power, and they have slipped aimlessly from his grasp. Wherever we look we shall see signs of half measures and inaction. For many weary months the Declaration of London was kept in being, unratified, by its proud begetter. In spite of the protests of Sir William Ramsay, chemist and patriot, cotton

was freely permitted to go wherever the ships of neutrals chose to take it. Viscount Grey's complaisance hampered the greatest fleet of all time in the exercise of its functions. The blockade became a by-word of scorn to enemies and neutrals alike. Under the hampering auspices of our Foreign Office we held the seas and cleansed them of mines, that the necessities of life should be poured into Germany through neutral ports. Even when we lacked ships to supply our own deficiency of food, the Germans got what they wanted from America; and had it not been for the spirited interference of the press, there would have been no tightening of the blockade unto this day.

Viscount Grey, as we have said, had no plan and no policy. He is a sentimental humanitarian, who prefers to make everybody, except his own people, as comfortable as he could. His one preoccupation is to remain on terms of a submissive friendship with all the neutrals, and most of the troubles which we have endured during the last two years are due to the fact that our Foreign Office has thought far more about the neutrals than about ourselves and our enemies. And as Viscount Grey has handled the question of the blockade with feebleness, so also has he wavered and stumbled in his treatment of the Balkans. With painful iteration he has been too late in every step that he has attempted to take. He has

allowed Ferdinand of Bulgaria to hoodwink him as he chose. Not for one moment has he dominated, as he should, a difficult situation. In a temper of sanguine ignorance he has let things drift whither they will. He has applied to Greece the same policy of indecision which failed lamentably in Bulgaria. He faces both ways with complete cheerfulness. Lord Robert Cecil, who speaks for him in the House of Commons, believes that "anything which makes for the reunion of all the Greeks would be a very desirable thing." And then with his next breath Lord Robert declares that "wherever we find part of the Greek community which is in fact under the Government of M. Venizelos or his Provisional Government, where the majority of the population recognise him as their Government, we recognise him as *de facto* the ruler of that portion of Greece." We cannot congratulate Lord Robert Cecil upon the elegance or clarity of his style. But he appears to think that reunion and disunion are one and the same thing. He would give his support at the same moment to King Constantine and M. Venizelos. If they are at daggers drawn, that is not his fault, and the British Foreign Office will continue to find harmony in discord, and to assure itself and its dupes that all is for the best in the best possible world. And yet when M. Venizelos himself asserts that "the Royalist troops are following the example of the

Bulgarians in the methods they employ to terrorise the adherents of the national movement," even Dr Pangloss himself might cease to smile. Lord Robert Cecil, however, goes far beyond the example of the supreme optimist. He continues to take sides with both parties, and to demonstrate the great truth that terror and friendship are merely two expressions of the same sentiment. And thus the Foreign Office gains its end of inactivity. It refuses to make up its mind, and takes no thought of Rumania or the Balkans. Meanwhile Lord Robert Cecil is kind enough to utter a set of helplessly, hopelessly irrelevant platitudes. "I hold very highly," says he, "that we, who have a very special position in regard to Greece, can desire nothing more than the greatness and prosperity of Greece." And again: "Anything which separates her from the Entente must end in disaster to Greece, and to a serious state of things which will last far beyond the end of the present war." Thus might Mr Gladstone have spoken in an hour of profound peace, when words divorced from meaning were the common counters of politicians. But to-day we are at war, and we wish to hear from Viscount Grey's mouthpiece not mere empty promises of benevolence, but a plain declaration of policy.

As in great things, so in small the Foreign Office proves its incompetence. The case of Miss Hobhouse was simple

enough, and should have been firmly dealt with. Her past was eloquent of suspicion. In the South African War she had most actively given aid and comfort to her King's enemies, and the Foreign Office had no reason to believe that in the interval she had suffered a change of heart. She belongs to a class only too familiar in this country. She has a natural dislike of the land which gave her birth, which has fed her and nursed her from her cradle. In truth the taste of cannibalism is stronger in her than gratitude, and if she could swallow up England at a meal, and thus render the task of England's enemies easier, no doubt she would feel an inward, if undigested, satisfaction. However, having obtained from the Foreign Office a passport for Italy, on the plea of ill-health, she found herself travelling in Germany and Belgium with "a humanitarian pass." Let us hope that the air of Louvain did her good! She went "simply and openly," she tells us, "contravening no law." As to the contravention of the law, she is not a sound judge. That she went "openly" is obvious, for she must have gone under the protection of the German Government. She visited Belgium, as on another occasion she visited South Africa, to do what she could for her country's enemies. And when she got there she saw, of course, precisely what her patrons wished and allowed her to see. The Kaiser's heart bled for Louvain. Miss Hobhouse is made

of sterner stuff. In her eyes Louvain was not vastly to be pitied. A round thousand houses might have been destroyed by fire, but many are still standing, and not all the inhabitants are murdered. In truth, Miss Hobhouse reminds us of a woman, pictured lately in a comic paper, who asks an invalid soldier how many times he had been wounded. "Once," he answers. "What, only once!" exclaims the woman. "Why, you old cannibal," says the soldier, "how many times would you have me wounded?"

The services which Miss Hobhouse did to Germany are by this familiar to all. The articles which she wrote have been translated into all tongues and sent broadcast by Germany over the civilised world. Thousands of neutrals have read them without knowing the author's inveterate prejudice, and may well have been misled by their falsehood far from the path of truth. She, of course, having done her best to help Germany, which treated her as an honoured guest, and to injure England, to which even she might acknowledge some small debt, is "proud and thankful." She would be. That kind commonly are. But what about the part played in this disgraceful episode by our Foreign Office? The utmost that has been extracted from Lord Robert Cecil is that he "imagines Miss Hobhouse will not be allowed again to leave the country." Imagines, indeed! Can he not give a plain answer to a plain question? If

his "imagination" gets to work, we shall probably hear of Miss Hobhouse travelling once more under German protection, and gratifying the Kaiser by loud pæans sung in praise of his humanity and gentleness. And while the Foreign Office "imagines" that henceforth Miss Hobhouse will not go abroad again, the Government declares that she has committed no crime and cannot be punished. We have always thought that it was treasonable to bring aid and comfort to the enemy; and treason, even in these days of cowardice and confusion, is still a crime. We are sure that if a Frenchwoman had been guilty of Miss Hobhouse's crime, she would not have escaped scot-free. M. Romain Rolland, the one pro-German of France, is very properly an exile in Switzerland. But our Government does nothing, until it is too late, to check the activities of such English men and women as find it convenient to succour and confer with the Germans. It will not understand that those who are not for us are against us, and that Miss Hobhouse, by the mere fact of travelling "simply and openly" in Germany, made herself an accomplice in Germany's misdeeds. Either she should have remained permanently under the Kaiser's protection, or she should have been interned instantly on her return to this country. However, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs fondly "imagines" that she will not go abroad again, and we shall be greatly sur-

prised, should her health once more demand the soothing air of Louvain, if she be not given as free and ample a passport as she desires.

Now, when the conduct of Foreign Affairs is criticised in the House, Lord Robert Cecil meets the criticism with a full and humble confession of incompetence. "No one is more conscious of the defects of the present Government," he says, "than every member of it. We all know that to undertake to govern a country at a time like this is to undertake a task which is really beyond human powers. We are perfectly conscious of the many mistakes we make, of the many deficiencies of which we are guilty, but I cannot believe that anything which waters down the responsibility of the Government is likely to improve it. We must do what we think right. We must carry on the Government, badly, I agree, but as well as we can do it, and we cannot share that responsibility with the House of Commons or with anybody else during the war. . . . If the House of Commons arrives at the conclusion that we are so bad that really we must be turned out and somebody else put in our places, be it so." We will take Lord Robert's last suggestion first. He knows perfectly well that the House of Commons, depleted by the war and bedevilled by a coalition, can turn nobody out, and therefore he is safe in offering, on behalf of his colleagues, to retire in certain circumstances.

For the rest we believe that so abject a speech as this has never been delivered in a great crisis. It is not in this spirit that Chatham faced the storm of war, or that Pitt the Younger resolved, amid the defection of his allies, to prosecute the war against Napoleon. They at least held their heads high, and did not whimper. They would not allow that any task thrust upon them was "beyond human powers," as indeed no task will ever be if men conduct the fight. But Lord Robert throws up the sponge. He is not fit for the combat, nor are his colleagues, and they one and all know their defects. They have no illusions, poor things! They are keenly conscious of their mistakes: they acknowledge their guilt as "simply and openly" as Miss Hobhouse travels in Germany and Belgium. At the same time, they decline to share their responsibility either with the House of Commons or with anybody else. They are not fit, as they acknowledge, to keep the responsibility; and yet they cling to it with all the feverishness of futility. "They must do what they think right." But if what they think right is wrong, even by their own confession, what then? Is England to suffer because a set of men, who have neither pride of place nor confidence in themselves, declare that they will still cling to responsibilities which they are unable to shoulder? "We must carry on the Government, badly, I agree," says Lord Robert, "but as well as we can

do it." Why should it be done badly? What excuse is there for a minister who, when we are fighting for our lives, acknowledges his helplessness, and freely confesses that the task which he and his colleagues have undertaken is beyond their powers?

In no other enterprise, save that of politics, would Lord Robert Cecil's attitude of apology be tolerated for an instant. It is a simple rule in all professions and all trades that if a man cannot do his work he must make way for one that can and will. An engine-driver, who declares that he is doing his best and then wrecks a train in culpable ignorance, is held guilty of manslaughter. But our politicians, who are wrecking far greater things than trains, take a gloomy kind of satisfaction in admitting their own incompetence. Truly the House of Commons has much to answer for. It is a place of worn-out conventions and absurd superstitions. In peacetime, troublesome as it is, it commits few crimes which are not reparable. In war-time, it may endanger the safety and happiness of the race. And it uses precisely the same language, precisely the same arguments in war as in peace. If the House of Commons, says Lord Robert, can turn the ministers out, by all means let it. If it cannot, then we propose to go on bungling and carrying on the Government as badly as ever. But where, in this welter of folly and irrelevance, does England come in? Shall she persevere in disaster

for the mere pleasure of being governed by men who make no secret of their incapacity?

And by their speech we shall know them. Having heard Lord Robert's words, and assuming him, as we may, to be the mouthpiece in the Commons of Viscount Grey, we assert confidently that neither he nor his master is fit for governance. The sooner they retire and wail in private over the limitations of human intelligence, the better chance we shall have of finishing the war. Surely the Germans never did a wiser thing than when they invented Viscount Grey as a sort of bogey to frighten their children. "The man without a conscience" was a brilliant discovery, and it has had all the effect which the Germans expected it to produce. If any one, daring greatly, utters a word in dispraise of Viscount Grey, he is told at once: "But see with what fear the Germans contemplate him!" Of course they contemplate him with perfect equanimity, congratulating themselves that their trickery has been successful; and so long as he is permitted to control our relations with foreign countries, we may be certain that he will pursue a policy of fear, and will refrain his mind and hand from coming to a decision.

So our Ministers, trusting not themselves, refuse also to trust the people. When Mr Runciman was forced by two years of wise agitation to tackle the problem of our food-supplies, he bent his

knee in apology as low as does Lord Robert Cecil. He renounced with great regret "the voluntary principles to which in past years he had been wedded." He hinted that he might have "to take steps which may bring about a good deal of discomfort in certain quarters." But he thought—his "thought" resembles Lord Robert Cecil's "imagining"—that "he had a right to ask that all our people at home should be prepared to put up with some hardship." Thus he proves that he completely misunderstands the situation. No sensible demand which he can make upon the people will be refused. It is he who has declined hitherto to listen to the people's voice. For the people, less fearful and of a stouter heart than the ministers, will shrink back from no sacrifice, is ready to bear the heaviest hardship that can be put upon its shoulders.

Indeed, it is not only in the field of foreign affairs that our present Government shows its incapacity. Whatever it attempts it bungles miserably. If it be true to any one principle, that principle is hostility to Great Britain and British interests. With a false magnanimity our Ministers are ready to abandon the fruits of victory to anybody whose lips ask to taste them. They affect a loftiness of spirit which is more nearly allied to laziness than to humanity. They seem, indeed, to suffer, one and all, from an atrophy of purpose, an inability to make up their mind, which are doubtless the

proper result of a political training. It may be that the conflicting members of the Cabinet reduce it always by their differences of opinion to an inactive condition of stable equilibrium. That is to find the kindest explanation for their many futilities. The more probable cause of their failure to govern the country, or to conduct the war with spirit, is a feeling of security. Whatever happens, it seems to them that their offices are safe. Mr Bonar Law believes, and assuredly his colleagues agree with him, that the Government, of which he is a member, is the best suited to carry on the war. Why, then, should they bestir themselves? They are indispensable, in their own eyes, and irreplaceable, and must on no account be disturbed in the enjoyment of what they believe to be their divine rights.

And in nothing have they displayed their ineptitude to greater disadvantage than in their treatment of the Nigerian sales. That their ineptitude did not gain the end they wished is not their fault, and they cannot avoid the blame of bad intentions. In the course of the war certain properties, once held and managed by Germans, have fallen into our hands. The Government, with undue haste, decided to put them up to auction and to knock them down to the highest bidder. It did not think that it was fit and proper to reserve for its own countrymen the right to purchase what has been con-

fiscated from the Germans. It hastened to throw open the bidding to busy neutrals, who have won the profits of the war without the dust; and by the unprovoked attack which it permitted to be made upon British merchants, it implied that it would far rather entrust the future destinies of Nigeria to foreign than to British hands.

The reason alleged for the Government's strange preference is stranger than the preference itself. We are informed by Mr Steel-Maitland that he and his friends regard themselves primarily "as trustees, in the African protectorate, for the natives." A most laudable aspiration, truly! But are British merchants less worthy than neutrals to trade with the natives of Africa? In our simplicity we have always believed ourselves more amiably inclined to subject races than the rest of the world. We have been told, upon evidence which has seemed to us impregnable, that Englishmen have shown a better skill and a firmer kindness in colonial enterprises than Dutchmen or Americans. And now our sanguine faith has been rudely shattered, not by the Radicals, who are disposed always to think ill of their kind, but by men who once aspired to the leadership and management of the Tory party. Without competition, then, the British merchants cannot be expected to do their duty. They would, if left to themselves, unite themselves into trusts—a form of commercial activity which, of course, is

quite unknown to the richest and most energetic of the neutrals, the Americans. And it is not to be wondered at that Sir Edward Carson found the suggestions of Mr Steel-Maitland insulting.

Now, we do not believe for one moment that the merchants of neutral countries are more keenly alive to the sentiment of justice than are the merchants of England. But even if our compatriots merited the pompous displeasure of Mr Steel-Maitland and his friends, safeguards might be devised to check the tyranny and avarice of Liverpool. Indeed we are not sure that the Colonial Office would not be compelled to keep an open eye, if it have one, upon the bland Dutchman, or that miracle of self-sacrifice, the American trader, were either of them installed in Nigeria. And Mr Bonar Law, straining at the gnat, has no difficulty in swallowing the camel. He fears the Government's inability to check the rapacity of Englishmen, a perfectly simple enterprise, and then asserts that, if proper conditions of sale are established, the Nigerian properties cannot possibly revert to their German owners. Nobody will agree with him who has studied the "peaceful penetration" which gave the Germans an immense advantage at the outset of the war. The Germans, as we all know now, are cunning and unscrupulous. Where they think the advantage of their Fatherland is at stake, they rid themselves instantly of all the morals which are wont to control the

actions of gentlemen. False oaths and broken engagements are the sad habits of their lives. They would find no obstacles in their paths if they put up hyphenated Americans to buy back their confiscated properties. We have no right and no cause to trust the neutrals, who fear the heavy foot of the Germans far more than they approve our weak complacency. Mr Bonar Law may impose what penalties he chooses; he may take an infinity of precautions. But if once he admits the neutrals as owners of properties in Nigeria he cannot exclude the Germans. What if the liquidator has the right, "by personal examination of the buyer, to make sure that he fulfils the condition that he is neither himself connected in any shape or form with any enemy firm, nor acting for an enemy firm"? The buyer may possess the true Germans' faculty of deception, and escape notice. Nor after he has made the purchase can he be called to account. An English merchant, if he committed an offence, is easily amenable to English justice. A neutral, were he punished justly or dispossessed righteously, would turn justice into a grievance and make an international episode of righteousness. The question permits but one answer: the Government must keep British interests in British hands. Sir Edward Carson tore such arguments as the Ministers presented to ribbons, and Sir H. Greenwood summed up the

matter in a few words which Englishmen will do well to ponder. "Nothing will persuade me," he said, "a life-long Imperialist, to vote for the establishment of a doctrine which would paralyse every Dominion, offend every Colony, discourage every soldier, and make mock of every sailor who has taken part on our side in this war. To treat a German agent or a neutral in exactly the same way as a British or Colonial merchant is an insult to this House and to the Empire." *Sic vos non vobis nificatis aves.* So we fight, that after the battle we may restore to the Germans what with toil and bloodshed we have taken from them.

However, the ominous spectacle was prepared for our behoof of an auction-sale, at which samples and snippets of the British Empire might be knocked down to the highest bidder, no matter where he came from or what his object was. The proceeding was not dignified. It was also unnecessary. The Government, which has shown so splendid an example of sloth in pressing matters, has been active only in this, which did not press at all. Ministers, who still refuse to wind up German banks and German businesses, strain every nerve to dispose of English properties at once to the first neutral that comes along. It is a tragi-comedy, such as we expect from Mr Asquith and his friends, who are determined that, while Germans shall never suffer the

smallest disadvantage from their hostility to us, no Englishman need ask or expect to profit by the sacrifices he has made in blood or treasure.

Indeed, if the Government was determined to exclude its own countrymen so far as it could from the commerce of Nigeria, it need have taken no final steps until after the war. And then it would have been more wisely inspired if it had kept the Nigerian properties in its own hands. It might have let them on lease to the man of British birth who made the best offer, and reserved to itself the right of resuming possession at the slightest suspicion of alien intrusion or extortionate trading. It could thus have safeguarded the interests of Englishmen and natives alike. Moreover, after the war it will be our first duty to reconstruct the battered finances of the Empire, and to develop with what energy we may our Imperial resources. We shall need all the income that is by any means available. We cannot afford to give away one penny of advantage even to the well-disposed neutral. If the sale had to be, we would have admitted none to the auction-room who did not belong by birth to the British Empire. But it would have been better to hold no sale at all, and to administer the properties to the best advantage of the community. "In a wise conservation and development of Imperial property," said Mr Henry Cust in a letter to 'The Times,' "may conceivably lie

our only way to Imperial solvency in the future." We agree with him entirely, and regret that it was impossible for the Government to accept his sound advice.

It was impossible for the Government to accept it, because it would have involved a definite policy and considerable forethought. And our Government hates nothing so much as forethought, except a definite policy. It prefers to live from hand to mouth upon its own boasts of indispensability. It doesn't want to think or to decide. If it has a mind, it is resolute not to make it up. Here it is with some troublesome properties in Nigeria on its hands. What is it to do with them? If only the Germans had clung to them, all would have been easy, and no questions would have been asked. But at least a sale by auction of Imperial assets is not too difficult even for a Minister. And the auctioneer can take the tiresome duty of advertisement off the Government's shoulders. He knows how to pack a room—which all patriots will be glad to hear holds some 800 to 1000 eager bidders—with neutrals gathered from the four quarters of the globe. Holland and America and Spain will all send their representatives, and doubtless when the sale is over the English Ministers, having unloaded a burden of responsibility and much Imperial property, will return to their academic debates with a keener zest and a higher resolution to make what they

can out of the serious occupation of their lives.

But the worst of the Coalition is this: it is tireless in using up for ever all those who come within its ill-omened circle. Mere contact with Mr Asquith and his Radical colleagues seems enough to destroy hopes and principles, cherished and defended pertinaciously for many a long year. With the exception of Sir Edward Carson, the Unionist leaders have given their nights and days to furnishing fresh proofs of Mr Asquith's indispensability; they have devoted whatever ingenuity they possess to proving that the superstitions of the Radicals are nothing more than the gospel of Toryism in another shape.

And then, after all, the division about the properties in Nigeria need not have been taken. The debate was not merely an insult to Great Britain; it was unnecessary. The Government piped to the neutrals, and the neutrals would not dance. All the hopes of Mr Steel-Maitland and Mr Bonar Law were grievously disappointed. In vain did these statesmen clamour that Nigeria could be saved only by the interposition of

amiable neutrals. The brutal Briton attended the sale in force, and purchased with his own cash those opportunities of benevolent commerce which the British Government had invited the Dutchman, the Spaniard, and the American to share. What now, we wonder, will become of the poor down-trodden natives whose best security was to be found in the free admission of neutral gold and neutral workers? Mr Steel-Maitland is doubtless trembling for the future of those to whom he says that he stands in the relation of a trustee. And Mr Bonar Law, who sighed for competition, who pinned his simple faith to new energy and new capital, which are wanted, he tells us, to develop the resources of Nigeria, what will he think of the pertinacity of the British merchants? To no purpose he has sanctioned an attack upon legitimate British trade, and if the nation once again has succeeded in protecting its own interests, it has succeeded by its own exertions, and in defiance of the Government's timidity and the Government's lack of faith.

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